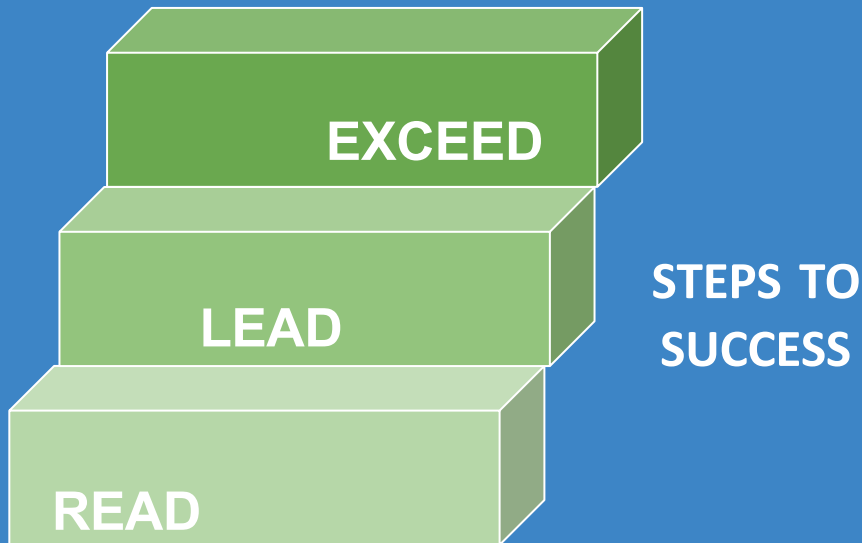


State Literacy Plan
Steps to Success
Series



**STEP ONE: PREPARING
FOR
YOUR COMPREHENSIVE
LITERACY PLAN**

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INTRODUCTION

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (Department) has made the science of reading a priority for all literacy initiatives from birth through grade 12. This action provides Missouri educators with the support and resources necessary to enhance student learning and strengthen their understanding of reading development.

The Department believes:

- literacy is the language of opportunity.
- children must be at the heart of all we do.
- every child has the right to learn to read on grade level.
- teachers – not programs or products – teach students to read, write, and spell.

The purpose of the **Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed: Steps to Success** series is to provide a framework for action with the intent of aligning state, district, and local efforts and ensuring that our students develop the strong literacy skills they need for the future. This initiative will empower educators, inspire students, and encourage leaders with high-quality learning, support, and resources making literacy accessible to all.

LITERACY DEFINED

The comprehensive body of evidence-based scientific research (the science of reading) from the fields of linguistics (language), neurology (the brain), psychology (the mind), literacy, and intervention reports clear evidence: explicit and systematic instruction in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension benefits all learners. It is important to note that the body of work referred to as the “science of reading” is not an ideology, philosophy, one-size-fits-all approach, program of instruction, or specific component of instruction. This comprehensive body of research informs evaluating, selecting, and implementing instructional programs and professional development. Research also informs how children learn to read and debunks methods of reading instruction based on tradition and observation, not evidence.

The evidence-based research making up the science of reading (e.g., Bottari, 2022; Moats, 2020; Shanahan, 2022) suggests that students need to learn the sounds letters represent (phonemes); to connect the letters/graphemes of the English alphabet that go with these sounds; to learn letter patterns that help them fluently decode and spell words; to read smoothly with expression; and to comprehend/make sense out of words, sentences, and paragraphs. These skills are the tools students need in order to be purposeful, fluent readers and communicators throughout life.

The Department aligns itself with the evidence-based research of the science of reading. The Department’s priority is having all literacy initiatives, birth through grade 12, be grounded in evidence-based best practices and ensuring Missouri educators are provided with support and resources that uphold this scientific understanding of reading and literacy development.

WHY IS THE SCIENCE OF READING IMPORTANT TO MISSOURI?

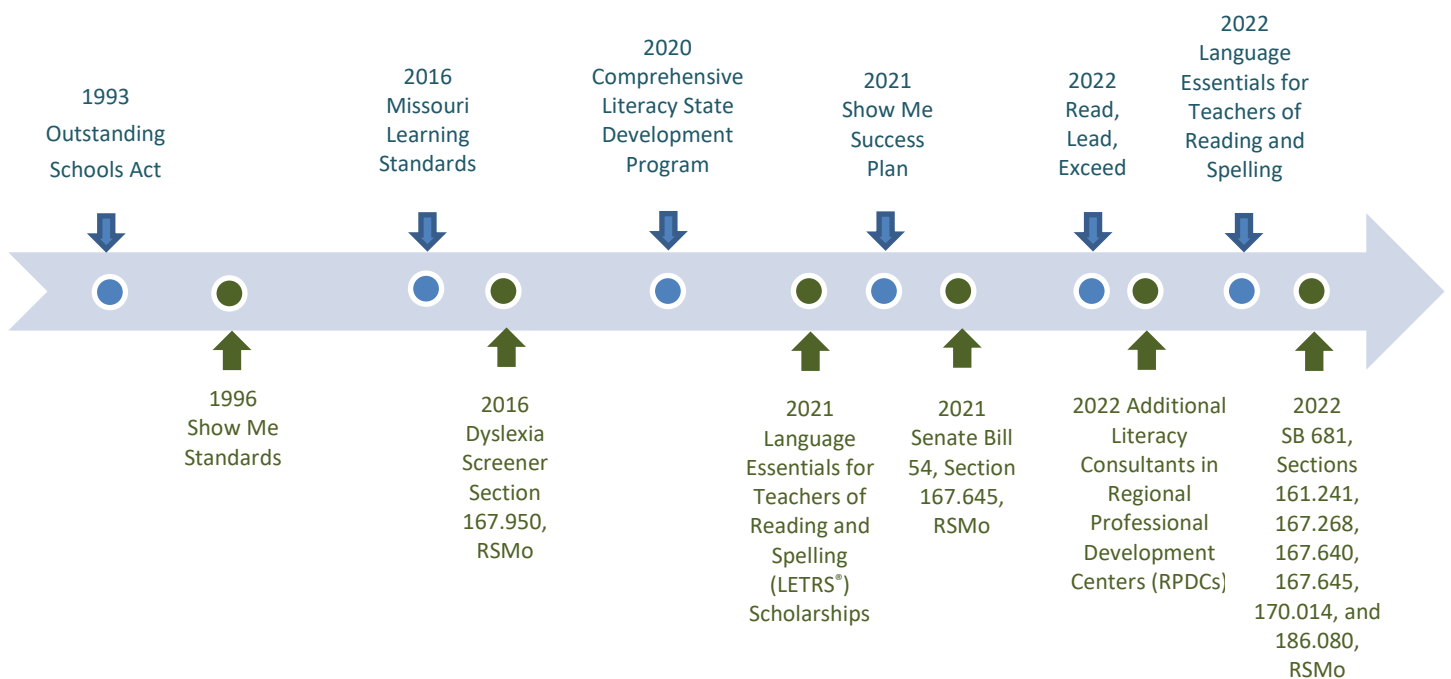
“Literacy is the essential education, the learning through which all other learning takes place. Crimp, deny, reduce, or thwart robust literacy acquisition and the prospects for achieving all other educational attainments are correspondingly diminished... Policymakers need to keep this stark reality firmly in mind” (International Literacy Association, 2016, p. 2).

Literacy—learning to communicate, read, and write as a means of expression, to gain knowledge by accessing stories, information, and voices across time and across the world—is at the heart of education (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2022). Improving literacy skills for Missouri students is not just the responsibility of our schools or classroom teachers; it takes a statewide collaborative effort. All stakeholders involved in supporting students need to understand their responsibilities and how they are able to contribute to the larger picture. Working together through common goals, collaboration, and communication, we can maximize the implementation of evidence-based strategies and provide all Missouri students with the opportunity to acquire the literacy skills they need to exceed.

Past literacy methods have promoted a philosophy of reading that minimized or omitted direct, systematic, and sequential teaching of language structure. Phonics instruction, which focuses on the relationship between individual letters and sounds, was de-emphasized in the past based on the belief that students would naturally learn to read by recognizing words as whole pieces. As understanding of the science of reading evolves, so must practice. Based on Missouri’s student performance data, educators cannot afford to occupy the middle ground. More must be done to ensure literacy growth for *all* students. When all stakeholders commit to using the science of reading to guide the work, Missouri’s students will be provided the instruction needed to reach reading proficiency targets.

The following timeline provides a brief overview of Missouri literacy initiatives, which will be further discussed in later sections of this document.

MISSOURI’S LITERACY JOURNEY



Show Me Success Plan Pillars and Strategic Goals March 2021

- ❖ **Early Learning and Early Literacy**
 - Every student is ready for school.
 - Every student is reading by the end of third grade.
- ❖ **Success-Ready Students & Workforce Development**
 - Every student engages in high-quality relevant learning experiences.
 - Every student is prepared for postsecondary experiences.
- ❖ **Safe & Healthy Schools**
 - Every school will provide a safe, protective, and supportive learning environment.
 - Every school provides an environment that promotes healthy student development.
- ❖ **Educator Recruitment & Retention**
 - Every school will recruit teachers who reflect Missouri's student demographics.
 - Every school will retain qualified and competent teachers.

OUTSTANDING SCHOOLS ACT OF 1993

The Outstanding Schools Act of 1993 convened master teachers, parents, and policy makers from across the state to create Missouri's academic standards. The result of that work was the Show Me Standards, which were adopted by the Missouri State Board of Education (Board) in 1996 (Authority for the Show Me Standards: 160.514, RSMo, and the Code of State Regulations, 5 CSR 50-375.100) The standards detail the proficiency competencies considered essential for students exiting high school to lead productive lives.

SHOW ME STANDARDS

The literacy-related Show Me Standards state the following: "In Communication Arts, students in Missouri public schools will acquire a solid foundation which includes knowledge of and proficiency in

1. speaking and writing standard English (including grammar, usage, punctuation, spelling, capitalization)
2. reading and evaluating fiction, poetry and drama
3. reading and evaluating nonfiction works and material (such as biographies, newspapers, technical manuals)
4. writing formally (such as reports, narratives, essays) and informally (such as outlines, notes)
5. comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral and visual presentations (such as storytelling, debates, lectures, multi-media productions)
6. participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas
7. identifying and evaluating relationships between language and culture."

The Show Me Standards establish a solid foundation of literacy skills that support the ever-increasing breadth and depth of what it means to be literate. Therefore, a literacy plan reflecting the reality of twenty-first century change is essential in guiding Missouri students' learning.

MISSOURI LEARNING STANDARDS: GRADE-LEVEL EXPECTATIONS

In April 2016, the Board adopted the Missouri Learning Standards (MLS): Grade-Level Expectations. Based on the Show Me Standards, which remain under Missouri law, the 2016 MLS expectations continue Missouri's tradition of high expectations for students and guide districts in revising local curricula and in promoting literacy.

As stated in the Department's strategic plan, our mission is to provide access to opportunity with the vision of improving lives through education. High-quality literacy instruction is essential in accomplishing this mission. An example of this is in the state's dyslexia legislation ([Section 167.950, RSMo](#)). The purpose of this legislation is to provide guidance to local education agencies (LEAs) for identifying and servicing students who are at-risk for dyslexia or related disorders. Missouri's LEAs have considerable autonomy regarding which screening and diagnostic tools are used, as well as which instructional methods and programs to implement. However, the Department provides definitions related to best practices for dyslexia identification and remediation. According to [SB 54 of 2021](#), the Board and the Department shall develop guidelines to assist LEAs in formulating policies for reading intervention success plans. Such guidelines may include, but are not limited to, timelines for measuring pupil improvement in reading and information on screening for treatment of dyslexia. In addition, any guidelines for instruction shall meet the needs of the student by ensuring instruction is explicit, systematic, and diagnostic and based on certain elements set forth in the act. Each school shall provide supplemental reading instruction under a reading success plan to any student who exhibits a reading deficiency ([Section 167.268 RSMo](#)).

COMPREHENSIVE LITERACY STATE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

Missouri is one of 11 states to receive a grant from the United States Department of Education for its Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) program. Distributed over five years (2020-25), the \$18 million grant allows the Department to advance literacy skills for children from birth through grade twelve. Authors of the Missouri grant chose to delegate funding for provided services, rather than send funds directly to all school districts. Hence, 80 schools were chosen to participate through the application process.



The Missouri CLSD program was designed to complement the Department's commitment to literacy for students under the agency's [Show Me Success plan](#).

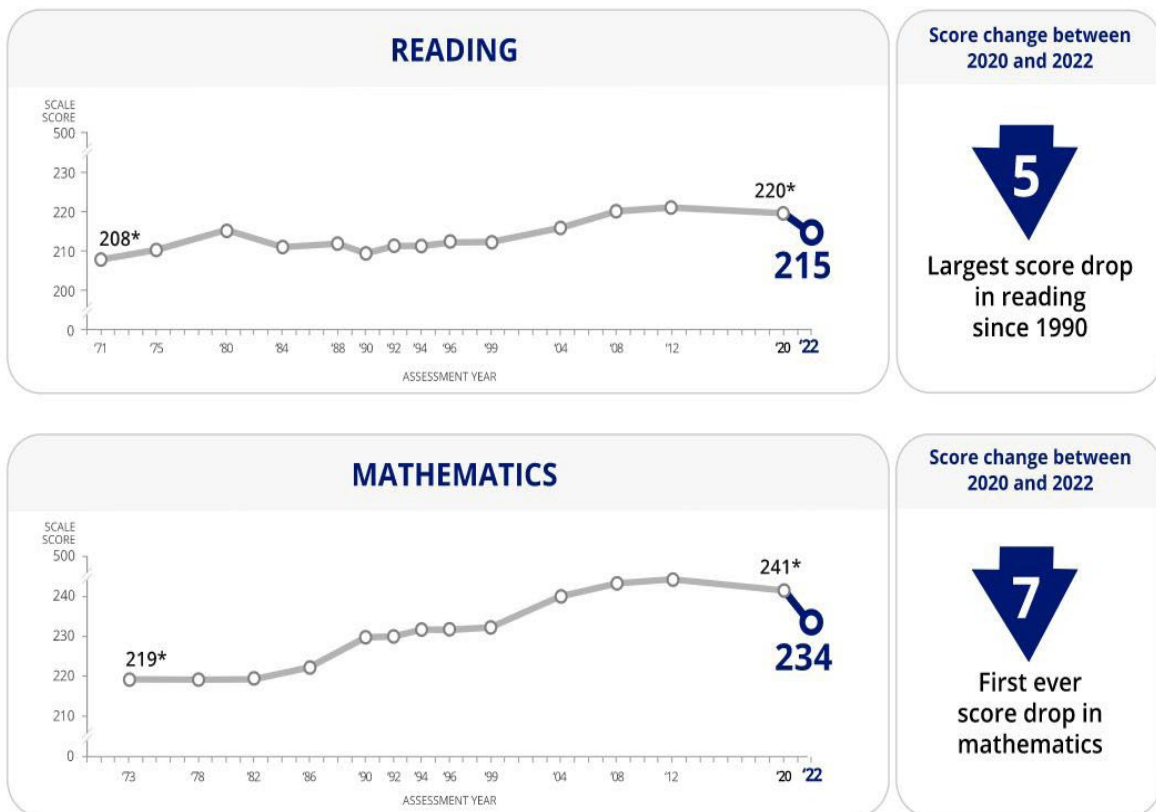
The goal of the project is to support educators' working knowledge of evidence-based literacy strategies allowing them to exceed in every aspect of literacy development at every level. This includes providing professional development to pre-service teachers in institutions of higher education, early childhood education teachers, and K-12 educators to enable them to provide effective instruction. Additionally, the CLSD grant supports LEAs by developing and implementing evidence-based literacy plans. These plans will establish a framework for effective literacy instruction and provide support for families.

Missouri's CLSD grant has provided an excellent opportunity for the Department to merge the work of several offices ensuring that evidence-based supports such Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS®) training is available to help a larger population of students and communities across our state. Data collected and resources developed through the grant will support ongoing state literacy goals and initiatives. You can view the content of Missouri's grant proposal in the [project narrative](#). Learn more about the U.S. Department of Education's CLSD program [here](#).

DATA

In 2022, the National Center for Education Statistics administered a special National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) long-term trend reading and mathematics assessments for nine-year old students to examine student achievement during the COVID-19 pandemic. Average scores for nine-year old students in 2022 declined five points in reading and seven points in mathematics compared to 2020. This is the largest average score decline in reading since 1990, and the first ever score decline in mathematics.

NAEP Long-Term Trend Assessment Results: Reading and Mathematics 2022

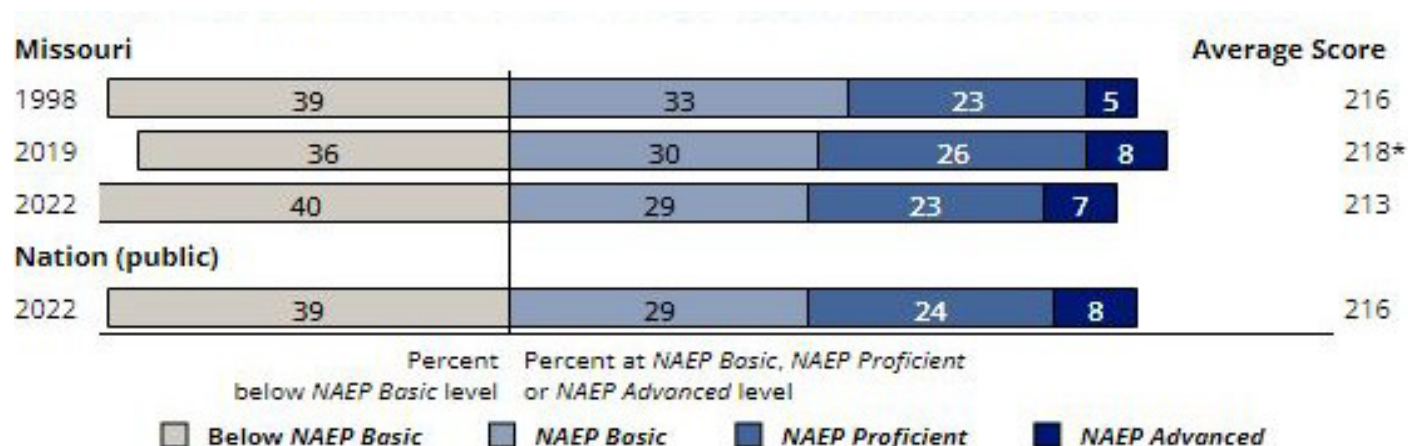


*Significantly different ($p < .05$) from 2022.

<https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/highlights/ltt/2022/>

When analyzing historical Missouri NAEP data, in 1998, Missouri eighth graders scored 261 on a reading scale ranging from 0-500. Over twenty years later, in 2019, Missouri eighth graders scored 263 on the NAEP assessment. While roughly 75 percent of students scored “at or above basic,” only about one third of students scored “at or above proficient” during the same time period. The trends are similar for fourth grade students tested. In 1998, the average reading score was 216 and in 2019 it was 218. While various educational initiatives at the local and federal level have started and ended over the last two decades, the results from Missouri’s NAEP data have not deviated more than a few percentage points (up or down) regardless of approach. Trends from the following 2019 NAEP reading scores illustrate this same scenario.

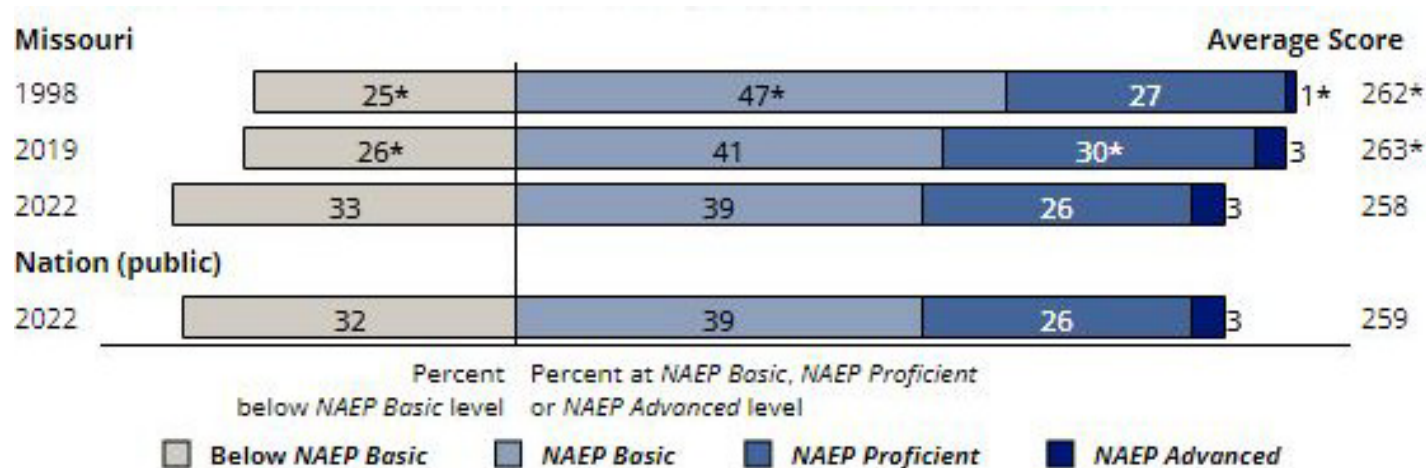
2022 Reading State Snapshot Report: Missouri Grade 4 NAEP Achievement Level Performance and Average Score Results



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from the state's results in 2022. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

2022 Reading State Snapshot Report: Missouri Grade 8 NAEP Achievement Level Performances and Average Score Results



* Significantly different ($p < .05$) from the state's results in 2022. Significance tests were performed using unrounded numbers.

NOTE: NAEP achievement levels are to be used on a trial basis and should be interpreted and used with caution. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

MISSOURI'S READ, LEAD, EXCEED INITIATIVE AND SB 681 (2022)

Research suggests that 35-40 percent of students will learn to read relatively easily or even effortlessly with broad instruction, but that most students require explicit and systematic instruction to learn how to read (Young, 2020). Additional research from the Stanford Center for Education Policy Analysis suggests that achievement gaps are strongly correlated with racial gaps in income, poverty rates, unemployment rates, and educational attainment. When these four factors are combined into a single index of racial socioeconomic disparities, the correlation between state achievement gaps and state racial socioeconomic disparities is high. Unfortunately, the Department has observed significant English Language Arts (ELA) achievement gaps continuing along socio-economic lines for students in both urban and rural areas, especially in schools with large populations of historically marginalized students. It became imperative to provide long-term supports to all Missouri schools and their communities to ensure students receive more effective literacy instruction.

A review of the data and progress from state dyslexia screenings, CLSD grant work, and state annual assessments paired with an extensive review and evaluation of literacy initiatives from other states led to the Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed Initiative. This initiative enhances and expands the Success-Ready Students & Workforce Development component of the Department's Show Me Success Plan and provides teachers with necessary training to make literacy accessible to all. SB 681 allows the Read, Lead, Exceed initiative to not only continue, but to expand as a requirement through state legislation.

Read, Lead, Exceed uses current data and research to support the formation of a framework, which focuses on five key components: Leadership and Sustainability; Standards-based Curriculum; Intentional Instruction, Intervention, and Enrichment; Assessment; and Partnerships. Interwoven throughout the framework is the Department's understanding that a strong foundation in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, writing/spelling, and comprehension is critical for reading success. To address this, the Department has expanded the number of literacy consultants at the Missouri RPDCs, expanded and enhanced the opportunity for LETRS® training for Missouri educators, updated and revised the Missouri Literacy Plan, and developed a Comprehensive Literacy Plan Framework Series.

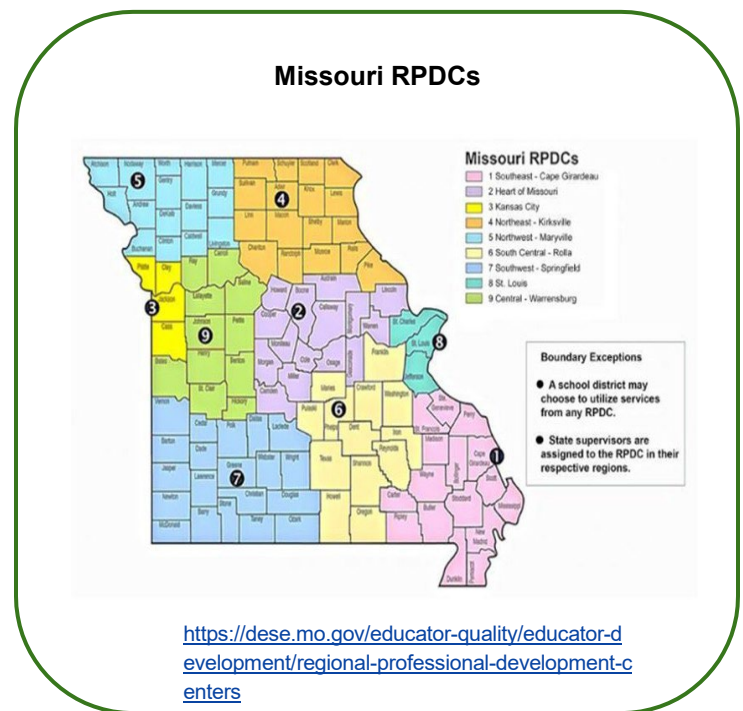


Literacy Consultants

In previous years, each of Missouri's nine RPDCs had only one part-time literacy consultant serving that region's school districts. As part of the Department's Read, Lead, Exceed Initiative and SB 681, Missouri moved the existing nine consultants to full-time status and added 16 additional literacy consultants. These RPDC literacy consultants provide LEAs with support and assistance in developing and implementing effective instructional methods and assessments, while providing teachers tools and strategies to improve the academic performance of students and fulfill the requirement of providing high-quality teacher trainers with expertise in reading instruction. Through intensive and ongoing evidence-based professional learning grounded in the science of reading, the literacy consultants help build local educator capacity to improve teacher practice so that all students learn and achieve at the highest levels.

In addition to supporting evidence-based science of reading instruction, every member of the literacy consultant team in each RPDC has a specific focus:

- Literacy Instruction and Intervention Consultants - LETRS® training, reading screenings, and supporting the Missouri dyslexia statutes and rules.
- K-3 Consultants - foundational literacy and the preparation and implementation of Missouri's second grade reading assessment.
- K-12 Consultants - multi-disciplinary literacy, comprehensive literacy, and supporting Missouri Learning Standards implementation and assessment.



Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed LETRS® Training

Missouri's Read, Lead, Exceed Initiative provides an evidence-based rationale for districts and schools to use in developing their own literacy plans without prescribing specific curriculum and resources. As district and school leaders continue expressing interest in this new plan and in receiving additional supports from the Department, several stakeholders began working together to develop a plan to provide such supports based on the science of reading. One of these supports is the continuation and expansion of LETRS® training for all K-5 educators. This training provides teachers evidence-based literacy knowledge, thus implementing effective instruction and intervention.

The Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed initiative includes a state comprehensive plan to dedicate just over \$35 million in federal relief funding to support student literacy development. As part of this plan, the Department has allocated funding that provides up to 15,000 K-5 classroom teachers LETRS® training thus providing equity of access to educators across the state. The LETRS® course of study gives teachers the skills needed to teach language and literacy to every student through in-depth training based on the science of reading. District teachers can attend face-to-face training and have online learning at no cost. The opportunity for LETRS® training provides sustained and job-embedded professional learning. Teachers will develop evidence-based foundational knowledge and skills to deliver explicit and systematic instruction focused on phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, writing, and language that positively affect long-term systemic change in literacy outcomes (Lexia Learning, 2022).

Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed began in August 2022 and will be facilitated by our state certified LETRS® trainers through their respective RPDCs. This effort will expand Missouri's over 4,000 educators already trained in LETRS® over the last few years to closer to 20,000 Missouri educators who will be LETRS® trained. Previous access to LETRS® training was locally funded or completed using small-scale scholarships through the Department and Missouri RPDCs.

High Quality Instructional Materials Aligned With the Science of Reading

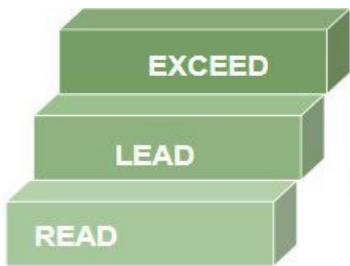
High quality instructional alignment efforts cannot end with teacher training. The Department must ensure that the instructional materials available for teacher use and student engagement is aligned with the science of reading. Therefore, starting in the spring of 2023, the Department will apply \$11.4 million from Elementary and the Secondary Schools Emergency Relief III Fund for Evidence-Based Instructional Resources Grants. With additional funding for resources made available through the passing of SB 681, Missouri will ensure teachers have instructional materials that align with the science of reading. A reviewed, approved list of resources will be available to all districts and grant funding will be allocated to purchase any materials that are included in the reviewed materials list.

This comprehensive and aggressive plan will address the immediate needs of literacy instruction in Missouri, as well as

provide a clear and committed path toward literacy instruction aligned to the science of reading.

Revision of the State Literacy Plan

In collaboration with its statewide partners and stakeholders for literacy, the Department is using the continuous improvement process to increase student literacy. Missouri has many existing policies, guidance documents, and structures designed to improve literacy for all Missouri students. While several investments and initiatives have focused on implementing these policies, the State Literacy Plan (SLP) provides an opportunity to align and integrate these resources in order to demonstrate how they are connected and best utilized in a coherent way. The SLP is woven throughout each step of Missouri's Read, Lead, Exceed Initiative and referenced where appropriate. You can find a link to the SLP in its entirety on the Read, Lead, Exceed [webpage](#).



Step 1: Preparing for Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Step 2: Designing Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan: a Framework and Self-Assessment for LEAs

Step 3: Implementing Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Step 4: Gathering, Analyzing and Reflecting on Data for Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Step 5: Next Steps - Revising and Updating for Continuous Improvement of Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

READ, LEAD, EXCEED: STEPS TO SUCCESS

Step 1: Preparing for Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan introduces and provides a comprehensive look at the research behind each component of a well-designed literacy plan. An integrated literacy model ensures that high-quality literacy instruction occurs within the context of inclusive and equitable systems of schooling and features high levels of engagement, a focus on continuous improvement, and application of the Comprehensive Literacy Framework. Step 1 includes the understanding that the framework is not a mandated document for districts but rather a collection of resources, ideas, and themes that might be considered in building a local, Comprehensive Literacy Plan (CLP). It sets the direction for literacy programs statewide by describing the alignment and integration of state literacy initiatives.

Step 2: Designing Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan: A Framework and Self-Assessment for LEAs is an evidence-based resource for administrators and teachers with useful information for parents and caregivers all along the K-12 continuum. Beginning with a self-assessment designed and piloted as part of the CLSD grant, districts can determine areas of needs and begin a plan of action. The framework provides information on integrating literacy instruction with the state standards and current knowledge about literacy development. It offers ideas and links to resources that promotes literacy, provides clear guidance on the components of a comprehensive literacy system, incorporates evidence-based practices necessary to achieve long-term success for students, and guides districts in developing a local CLP.

Additionally, the framework encompasses all aspects of reading, writing, listening, and speaking using effective methods, strategies, and materials needed in promoting successful learning.

Step 2 supports the development of the following broad range of skills and knowledge necessary to be truly literate by:

- integrating listening, speaking, reading, writing, and critical thinking across all media types;
- recognizing and using language that is appropriate to a situation; and
- thinking, creating, questioning, analyzing, problem solving, and reflecting.

As a result of **Step 2**, the Department anticipates that LEAs will successfully design their own literacy plan to meet the needs of their students.

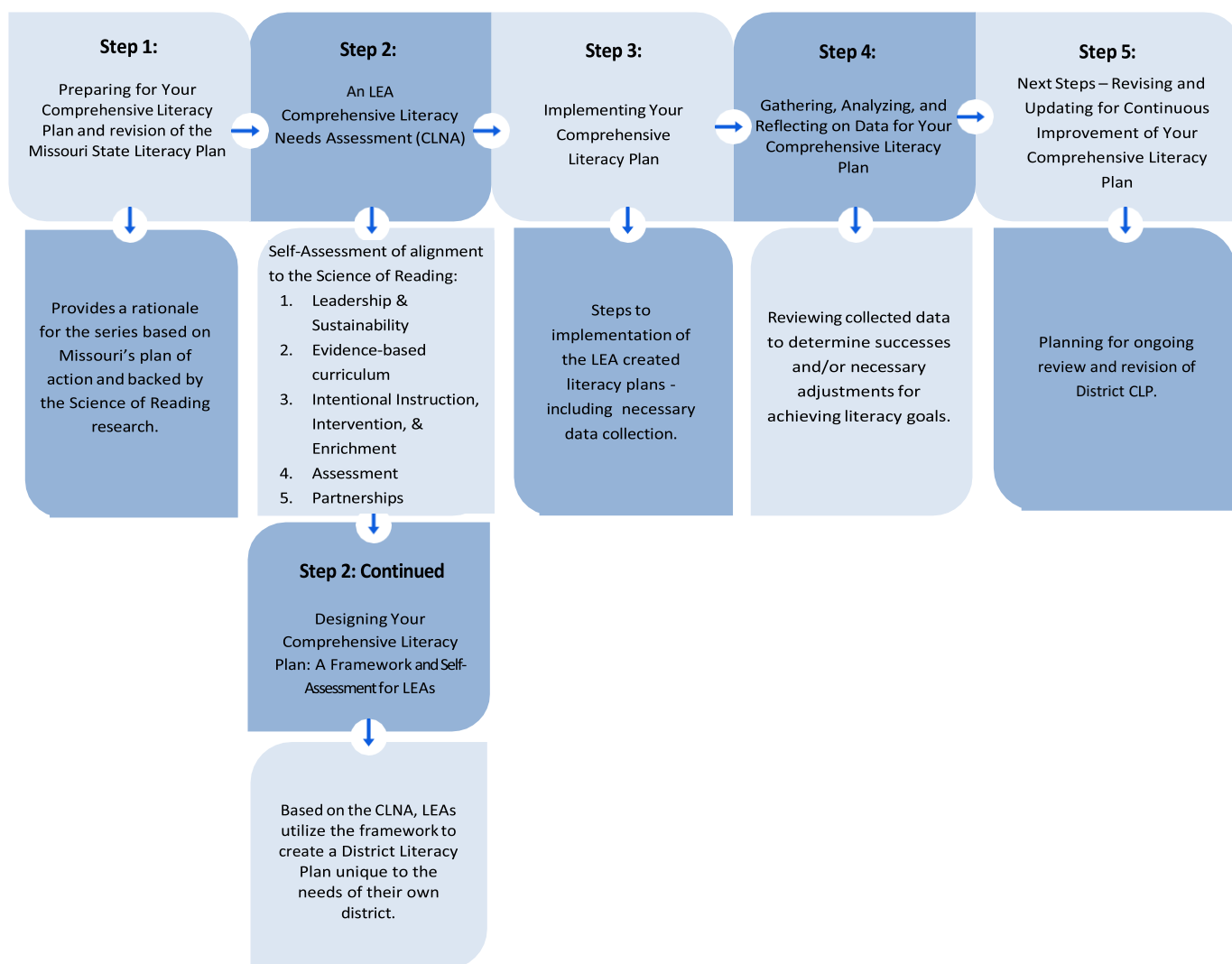
Following **Step 2**, the Department will continue the series with the following steps:

Step 3: Implementing Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

Step 4: Gathering, Analyzing, and Reflecting on Data for Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

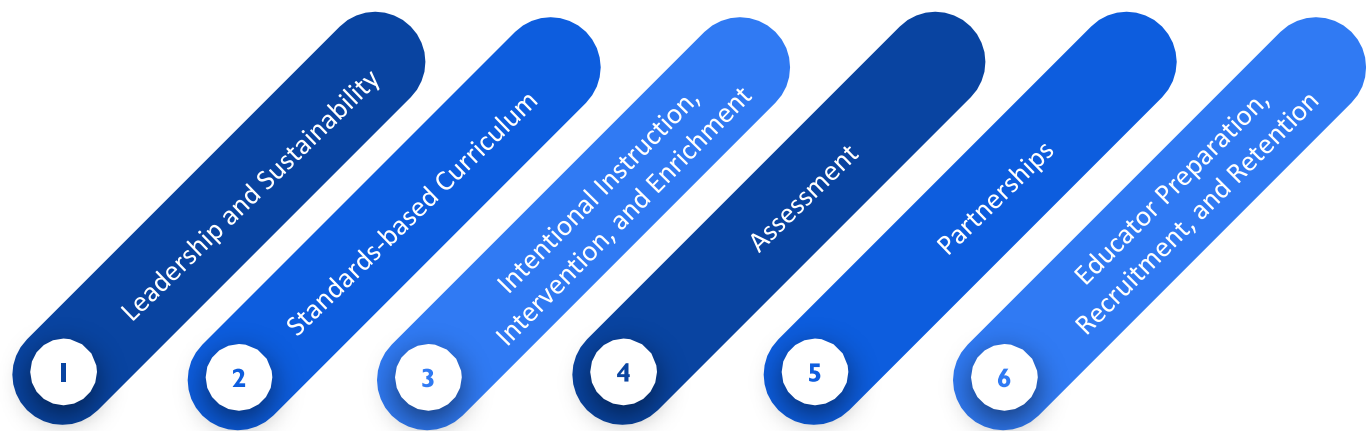
Step 5: Next Steps - Revising and Updating for Continuous Improvement of Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan

PROJECTED TIMELINE



MISSOURI'S FOCUS

Read, Lead, Exceed uses current data and research to support the formation of a framework, which focuses on six key areas:

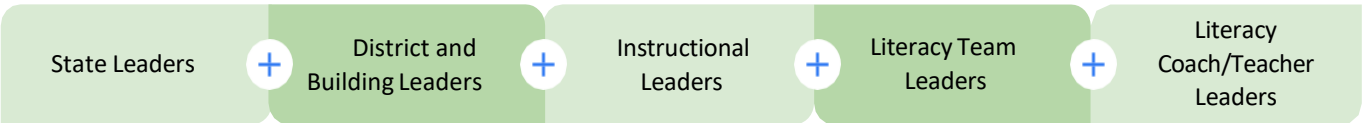


Each focus area is essential for all Missouri children’s literacy development, and is interwoven to create a full picture of literacy education in Missouri.

Step 1 of the Read, Lead, Exceed series (this guide) explains the key components and research behind our focus while Step 2 provides and encourages a systemic and synchronized approach to literacy implementation that includes self-evaluation and state, district, and community involvement, collaboration, and commitment.

LEADERSHIP & SUSTAINABILITY

Leadership is a key component in any literacy initiative. Collaborative leaders provide strategic guidance, support databased decision making, distribute resources, and encourage partnerships for sharing knowledge and best practices. Several stakeholders may be involved within this component, including state leaders (the Department), district and building administration, and instructional staff working collaboratively to ensure a common set of values and beliefs that guide literacy instruction.



State Leaders

Because of their work interpreting state and federal policies, leaders at the Department are in a position to serve as liaisons between legislative policy and classroom practice pertaining to literacy. The Department leaders provide support and guidance for educators seeking to improve literacy in their districts and schools. An array of resources from the department leaders provides opportunities for educators to learn about and engage in best practices for literacy instruction. With resources ranging from professional development workshops to high-quality online materials, state leaders ensure that literacy education remains an attainable statewide priority.

District and Building Leaders

Booth and Roswell (2007) state, “Schools that have successful literacy programs show evidence of strong principal leadership, with focused attention on setting a literacy agenda, supporting teachers, accessing resources and building a capacity for further growth” (page 15).

The role of the administrative leader and building-level principal is of primary importance. Research (Sebring & Bryk, 2000; Hargreaves & Fink, 2006; Mitchell & Sackney, 2009) suggests sustained, long-term commitment to the professional growth of teachers is a critical function of effective school leadership.

The administrator and/or principal is the primary change agent for the school. Biancarosa and Snow (2004) state, “Without a principal’s clear commitment and enthusiasm, a curricular and instructional reform has no more chance of succeeding than any other schoolwide reform.” (page 21).

To develop and implement a strong literacy program, administrators:

- articulate and monitor high expectations of all staff and students,
- ensure ample time for enriched literacy development and learning for staff members,
- ensure ample time for collaboration among staff members,
- maximize time for literacy instruction within the classroom,
- support opportunities for students, both within and outside of the school day, such as needed interventions and enrichment, homework help, early learning and parent involvement, high school credit recovery, and extra-curricular activities related to literacy (e.g., writing camps, book clubs, etc.),
- comply with federal and state mandates and policies pertaining to literacy,
- fund the evidence-based resources necessary to sustain and grow K-12 literacy; and
- provide time and tools for teachers to analyze assessment data and reflect on instructional practices.

Instructional Leaders

At the heart of all student learning is the instructional staff. Teachers not only carry the responsibility for implementing evidence-based literacy instruction but also for sustaining the culture of literacy. Beyond establishing a culture of literacy, there is an ongoing commitment to improve student learning through thoughtful and purposeful collaboration with the building and district administration, colleagues, and parents. Teacher involvement across all content areas is essential in ensuring that teaching literacy is interwoven across all aspects of learning.

Literacy Team Leaders

Within district literacy teams, the leadership responsibilities are shared. Establishing a literacy team encourages building staff representation in the decision-making process and leads to sustaining student achievement (Craig, 2013). This team includes literacy experts, such as literacy coaches, media specialists, and others who are knowledgeable in literacy practices, methods, and resources. Essential members of this team are teachers from each grade level and content area as well as any special populations (e.g., special education teachers, English learner teachers, reading specialists, speech and language teachers, occupational therapists, and/or other critical school personnel who have frontline impact on students’ literacy development).

The literacy team:

- analyzes data to make sound instructional and professional development decisions,
- optimizes available resources for literacy instruction,
- develops and implements a building literacy plan, and/or
- supports new and existing staff.

Literacy Coach/Teacher Leaders

Literacy coaches provide ongoing, job-embedded training and support for teachers to build capacity and effectiveness in literacy instruction. They spend most of their time working with teachers and students to demonstrate lessons for educators (Wren & Reed, 2005).

The literacy coach/teacher leader offers support to faculty in a non-evaluative role, knowing that building and maintaining trust is imperative when asking teachers to learn, step out of their comfort zones, and engage in opportunities to grow as educators.

It is also expected that the literacy coach/teacher leader is provided with the time and resources necessary to engage in professional development. The literacy coach/teacher leader stays abreast of and receives professional development on current research in the areas of literacy, data analysis, and adult learning. In order to provide more equity of access for coaching, small schools who are not able to provide coaches can access literacy coaches through the RPDC free of charge.

Literacy coaching standards outlined in the International Reading Association report, created in collaboration with other national content organizations (National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM), National Science Teaching Association (NSTA), and National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS)) outline what a literacy coach should know and be able to do (Novak, 2014).

STANDARDS-BASED CURRICULUM

(Alignment with Missouri Learning Standards)

The foundation of any literacy plan, whether at the state, district, building, or classroom level, is a standards-based curriculum. A standards-based curriculum provides the content and expectations for all students to develop skills over the course of their educational experience to prepare them once they graduate. A strong standards-based curriculum ensures students, teachers, administrators, and parents of a rigorous and intentional curriculum aligned to the MLS to support student learning and success in reading, writing, speaking, and listening across all content areas.

Missouri's standards-based curriculum:

- provides clear expectations in all areas of literacy: reading, writing, speaking, and listening,
- includes expectations for students to access, interpret, analyze, evaluate, and create texts of various types in various media,
- embeds explicit, evidence-based, grade-appropriate literacy instruction and instruction in research skills across the curriculum,
- ensures development of academic and content-specific vocabulary across and among grade levels,
- integrates student use of technology to gather, organize, manipulate, and express ideas and information for a variety of authentic purposes and audiences,
- aligns and articulates horizontally and vertically to provide a seamless transition from class to class, grade to grade, and school to school,
- includes a balanced system of assessment with both formal and informal evaluation techniques to drive instruction and determine success,
- challenges and develop students to think critically at high levels,
- provides opportunities for extension and enrichment through inquiry-based activities and projects; and
- allows differentiation to respond to individual student needs.

A written, standards-based literacy curriculum can help improve teaching, inform planning, and guide and shape accountability. It should periodically be reviewed, evaluated, and revised by all stakeholders based on data, new research on student growth and learning, and effective pedagogy. The written, taught, and learned curriculum must be systematic and implemented with fidelity.

Effective instruction focuses on all learner groups, including age- and grade-level groups, high school, and special populations such as special education, gifted, students with dyslexia, and English learners (ELs). It is important to recognize that certain instructional strategies, structures, and methodologies are more applicable and appropriate to specific learners.

According to The New Teacher Project (2018), the four key resources at the heart of high-quality instruction are:

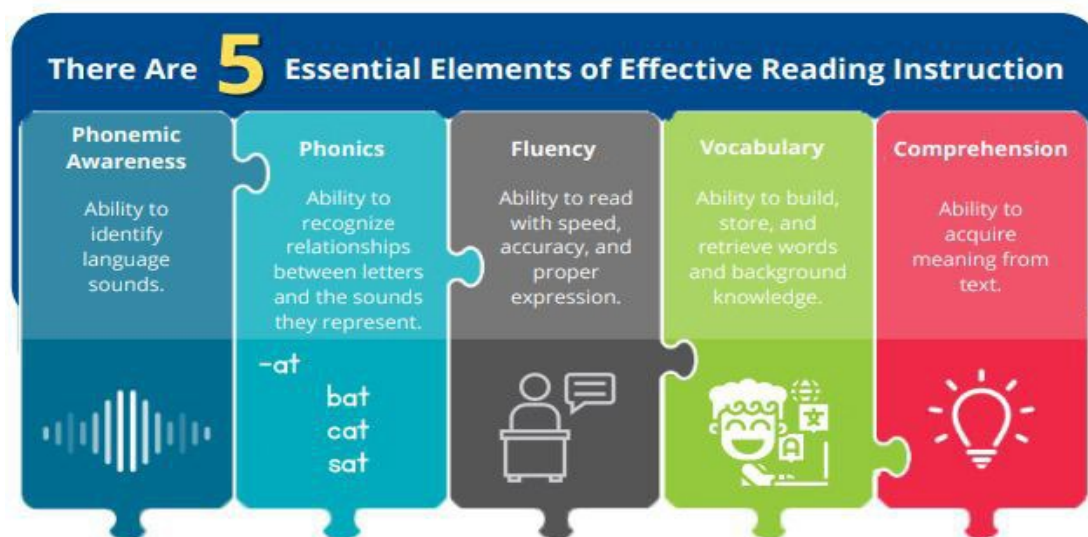
- strong instruction that lets students do most of the thinking in the lesson,
- consistent opportunities to work on grade-level appropriate assignments,
- a sense by students of deep engagement in what they are learning, and
- teachers who hold high expectations for students and truly believe they can meet grade-level standards.

INTENTIONAL INSTRUCTION, INTERVENTION, AND ENRICHMENT

For students to develop well-rounded literacy skills, reading, writing, listening, and speaking must be components of every lesson throughout the day. While Missouri’s state standards for ELA set grade-level expectations for students, it is necessary to understand that a student, regardless of grade level, may land at any point on the literacy continuum. High-quality instruction meets students where they are on the continuum and guides them forward.

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are reciprocal processes. The goal of the reader or listener is to use language to understand the message the writer or speaker is attempting to convey. The goal of the writer or speaker is to use language to communicate an intended message to the targeted audience. This concept is true regardless of content area.

Organization and Instruction of Reading at the Elementary Level



National Reading Panel, 2000

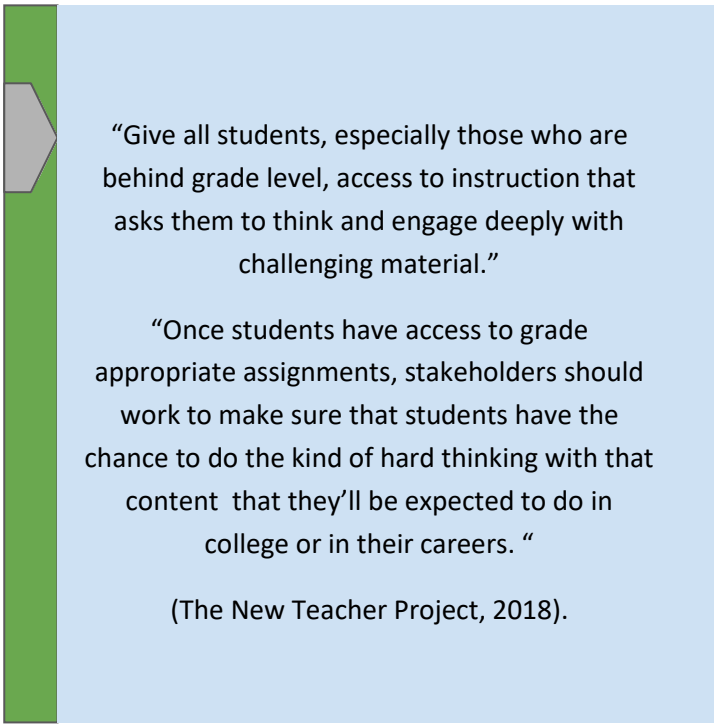
Instruction in each of the five essential elements of effective reading instruction must be systematic and explicit in nature while being integrated with purposeful, authentic instruction. The five essential elements of reading instruction must extend beyond kindergarten and first grade. For example, phonological awareness skills may continue to develop through third grade and beyond, particularly for students who struggle. It is important that explicit and systematic

instruction in phonological awareness be continually monitored (Kilpatrick, 2015). Systematic instruction that progressively builds on previous skills is vital to phonemic awareness such as using phonics to decode unfamiliar words, as well as using phonemic connections to spell student's words and ideas.

Meeting the needs of diverse readers is no small task. In a typical third grade classroom, there may be non-readers, emerging readers, developing readers, and students who read at fifth or sixth grade levels or even higher. Many classrooms in which all instruction is delivered in English include students who are learning to read and speak in English at the same time. A single classroom may include children who speak several different languages at home. Teachers address these various needs by providing *differentiated instruction*, using the results of diagnostic assessments to help them identify students' strengths and needs, forming small groups to plan and target those needs. Typically, this means that teachers implement reading instruction in small groups as well as in whole class formats.

After acquiring a solid foundation of early literacy skills, students need opportunities preferably—authentic—to build reading fluency and stamina. With continually growing access to all kinds of texts, it is crucial students have the exposure to a variety of forms to develop the different types of fluency and stamina these different text types require. The National Council of Teachers of English (2012) recognized this shifting literacy landscape and the attention teachers must pay to the evolving forms of text students will encounter. “In and out of school, the texts students read vary significantly, from linear text-only books to multimodal textbooks to online hypertexts, each of which places different demands on readers and requires different strategies and approaches to reading” (page 1). Teachers then must be able to provide instruction and opportunities for students to engage with texts in both guided and independent ways.

Research-informed reading comprehension strategies should be taught and practiced with the ultimate goal of understanding what is being read at the forefront of the lessons. It is important to remember that students must be able to read and understand the words in a text in order to understand the text. Teachers should spend time providing critical vocabulary support to students, helping them understand words that are critical to the text. Because of the clear link between background knowledge and text comprehension, teachers may need to provide students with some background knowledge the author may assume they already have as they scaffold student understanding of unfamiliar, complex text. Class discussions and tasks should be focused on unpacking the richness of the text and helping students focus on and build knowledge of the texts' content.



“Give all students, especially those who are behind grade level, access to instruction that asks them to think and engage deeply with challenging material.”

“Once students have access to grade appropriate assignments, stakeholders should work to make sure that students have the chance to do the kind of hard thinking with that content that they'll be expected to do in college or in their careers. “

(The New Teacher Project, 2018).

Phonological and Phonemic Awareness in Foundational Skills

Both phonological awareness and phonemic awareness are oral and auditory. Phonological awareness refers to the bigger parts of language. It is what enables you to hear a sentence and immediately determine that it contains spoken words. Phonological awareness is what is evaluated when students are asked to rhyme, use small words to make a compound word, break words apart into syllables, or onset-rime (Bottari, 2020).

Phonemic awareness is often confused with or used interchangeably with the term phonological awareness. However, they are not identical. Phonemic awareness is part of phonological awareness. The most complex level of phonological awareness happens within the smallest units of sounds and is referred to as phonemic awareness. Phonemic awareness is the ability to identify the individual sounds in words and one of the best predictors of early reading success is teaching students to manipulate sounds in words in a variety of word positions (Kilpatrick, 2015). Many studies have established that phonemic awareness and phonics (the representation of those sounds with letters) are essential for skilled reading (Adams, 1994; Ehri, 2004; Torgesen et al., 2001).

To effectively decode (convert from print to speech) and encode (convert from speech to print) all words, students must be able to: identify the individual sounds, or phonemes, that make up the words they hear in speech; name the letters of the alphabet as they appear in print; and identify each letter's corresponding sound(s) (Foorman et al., 2016).

The Missouri Read, Lead, Exceed Initiative has made LETRS® training available to Missouri educators. In Unit 2 of the LETRS® training, teachers are introduced to phonological and phonemic awareness. The following pages from Unit 2 provide a chart of the typical age expectation for task performance (Table 2.2) and examples of phonological awareness activities (Table 2.3).

Phonics

It is important to recognize that the goal of phonics instruction is to provide children with key knowledge and skills to ensure that they know how to apply that knowledge in their reading and writing. In other words, phonics teaching is a means to an end. In implementing systematic phonics instruction, educators must keep the goal in mind. They must also ensure that children understand the purpose of learning letter sounds and that they are able to apply these skills accurately and fluently in their daily reading and writing activities (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Knowing that not all phonics instructions are the same brings with it the implication that teachers must be educated about how to evaluate different programs, and then determine which ones are based on strong evidence and how they can most effectively use these programs in their own classrooms. It is therefore important that teachers be provided with evidence-based, ongoing training to select (or develop) and implement the most appropriate instruction effectively.

Teachers must understand that systematic phonics instruction is only one component—albeit a necessary component—of a total reading program. Systematic phonics instruction should be integrated with other reading instruction in phonemic awareness, fluency, and comprehension strategies to create a complete reading program. While most teachers and educational decision-makers recognize this, there may be a tendency in some classrooms, particularly in first grade, to allow phonics to become the dominant component, not only in the time devoted to it, but also in the significance attached. It is important not to judge children's reading competence solely on the basis of their phonics skills and not to devalue their interest in books because they cannot decode with complete accuracy. It is also critical for teachers to understand that systematic phonics instruction can be provided in an entertaining, vibrant, and creative manner.

Systematic phonics instruction is designed to increase accuracy in decoding and word recognition skills, which in turn facilitate comprehension. However, it is again important to note that fluent and automatic application of phonics skills to text is another critical skill that must be taught and learned to maximize oral reading and reading comprehension. This topic again underscores the need for teachers to understand that while phonics skills are necessary in order to learn to read, they are not sufficient in their own right. Phonics skills must be integrated with the development of phonemic awareness, fluency and text reading comprehension skills (National Reading Panel, 2000).

Table 2.3: Tasks Often Used to Assess and Teach Phonological and Phonemic Awareness

Typical Age of Performance	Phonemic Skill	Sample Tasks
5	Matching words with the same first sound	"Do <i>Mary</i> and <i>Martha</i> start with the same sound?"
5.5	Recognizing if single sounds are the same or different Blending a first sound with a rime Segmenting and saying a first single consonant	"Are these the same? /s/, /s/." "Are these the same? /s/, /sh/." "What word? <i>th – umb</i> , <i>s – oap</i> , <i>m – ilk</i> ." "What is the first sound in <i>shoe</i> , <i>van</i> , <i>note</i> ?" (/sh/, /v/, /n/)
6	Segmenting final phoneme Segmenting phonemes and blending of VC, CV, and CVC syllables	"Say the last sound in <i>rap</i> ." (/p/) "Say the last sound in <i>sing</i> ." (/ng/) Say each sound in the word as you move (or point to) a chip (or token): "/sh/ /ē/" (<i>she</i>) "/m/ /ă/ /n/" (<i>man</i>) "/l/ /ē/ /g/" (<i>leg</i>)
6.5	Substituting a phoneme to build a new word—final and medial sounds Segmenting the sounds in CCVC syllables (with initial blends)	"Say <i>cage</i> ." (<i>cage</i>) "Now change /j/ to /n/." (<i>cane</i>) "Say <i>pot</i> ." (<i>pot</i>) "If I change <i>pot</i> to <i>pat</i> , what sound has changed?" (/ō/ to /ă/) Tap and say the sounds: "/s/ /t/ /ō/ /p/" (<i>stop</i>) "/s/ /m/ /ă/ /k/" (<i>smack</i>)
7	Deleting sounds in initial and final positions Substituting sounds in words with blends	"Say <i>meat</i> ." (<i>meat</i>) "Say it again without /m/." (<i>eat</i>) "Say <i>safe</i> ." (<i>safe</i>) "Say it again without /f/." (<i>say</i>) Showing changes with tokens: "What sound have I changed? <i>Bread</i> , <i>bled</i> ." (/r/ to /l/)
8	Deleting outside sound in words with blends	"Say <i>prank</i> ." (<i>prank</i>) "Say it again without the /p/." (<i>rank</i>)
9	Deleting and substituting any sound in more complex syllables	"Say <i>snail</i> ." (<i>snail</i>) "Say it again without /n/." (<i>sail</i>) "Say <i>smoke</i> ." (<i>smoke</i>) "Say it again without /m/." (<i>soak</i>)

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Table 2.2: Examples of Phonological Awareness Activities

Units of Speech	Sample Activity				
Word: A word has a consistent pronunciation, a consistent referent (meaning), and a place within sentence structure.	Orally say each word in a sentence while touching a chip or block that represents each word. <table><tr><td>Our</td><td>cat</td><td>runs</td><td>fast.</td></tr></table>	Our	cat	runs	fast.
Our	cat	runs	fast.		
Syllable: A syllable is a unit of speech that is organized around a vowel sound. <i>dis – or – gan – i – za – tion</i> <i>man – eu – ver</i>	Tap your arm as you say each syllable. <i>cer – e – al</i> <i>pic – nic</i> <i>choc – o – late</i>				
Alliteration: The repetition of initial sounds in two or more words or syllables.	Say: “Suzy sells seashells by the seashore.” Say: “Let’s make a silly sentence with /m/ words: Magic monkeys make . . .”				
Onset and Rime: A syllable always has a <i>rime</i> —the vowel and any consonants that follow it. Most syllables also have an <i>onset</i> —the consonant(s) that come before the vowel. <i>f – ish squ – ish</i> <i>fr – esh spl – ash</i>	Orally blend the two pieces of a syllable together. <i>cl + ean = clean</i> <i>h + am = ham</i> (Note that <i>rhyming</i> involves the manipulation of <i>rimes</i> .)				
Phoneme: A phoneme is the smallest segment of sound that differentiates words in a language system.	Initial Phoneme Isolation: Separate and say the first sound. Say: “/m/–/ilk/. What’s the first sound your mouth is making?” (/m/)				
	Phoneme Blending: Say: “Listen. The robot can only say one sound at a time. What’s the word?” <i>/p/–/ĕ/–/g/ (peg)</i> <i>/ch/–/ŏ/–/p/ (chop)</i> <i>/f/–/r/–/ī/–/t/–/ĕ/–/n/ (frighten)</i>				
	Phoneme Segmentation: “Say <i>pan</i> .” (<i>pan</i>) “Say the sounds in <i>pan</i> .” (/p/–/ă/–/n/)				
	Phoneme Deletion: “Say <i>sleep</i> .” (<i>sleep</i>) “Now say <i>sleep</i> but don’t say /s/.” (<i>leap</i>)				
	Phoneme Substitution: <i>chose</i> = /ch/–/ŏ/–/z/ <i>those</i> = /th/–/ŏ/–/z/ (one sound change) <i>these</i> = /th/–/ē/–/z/ (one sound change) <i>threes</i> = /th/–/r/–/ē/–/z/ (two sound changes)				

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Fluency in Foundational Skills

Fluency is defined as “reading with reasonable accuracy at an appropriate rate with suitable prosody that leads to accurate and deep comprehension and motivation to read” (Hasbrouck & Glaser, 2012, page 13). Fluent reading is often associated with skilled reading (which indeed it is) and needs to be taught explicitly and monitored throughout a student’s academic career. A fluent reader can concentrate on comprehending the text rather than decoding the words.

According to Foorman et al. (2016), several routes assist readers as they develop fluency:

- As students read orally, model strategies, scaffold, and provide feedback to support accurate and efficient word identification.
- Teach students to self-monitor their understanding of the text and to self-correct word-reading errors.
- Provide opportunities for oral reading practice with feedback to develop fluent and accurate reading with expression.

Vocabulary Development at the Foundational Level

Vocabulary knowledge could be considered a proxy for a person’s background knowledge. A person who has more knowledge of a subject is likely to better comprehend text about that subject, as well as know more words related to the topic (Compton, D., Elleman, A., Lindo, E., Morphy, P., 2009). The larger vocabulary a person has, the easier it is to read and comprehend what they read. Thus, there is a direct, positive relationship between the depth of a learner’s vocabulary and the learner’s academic success.

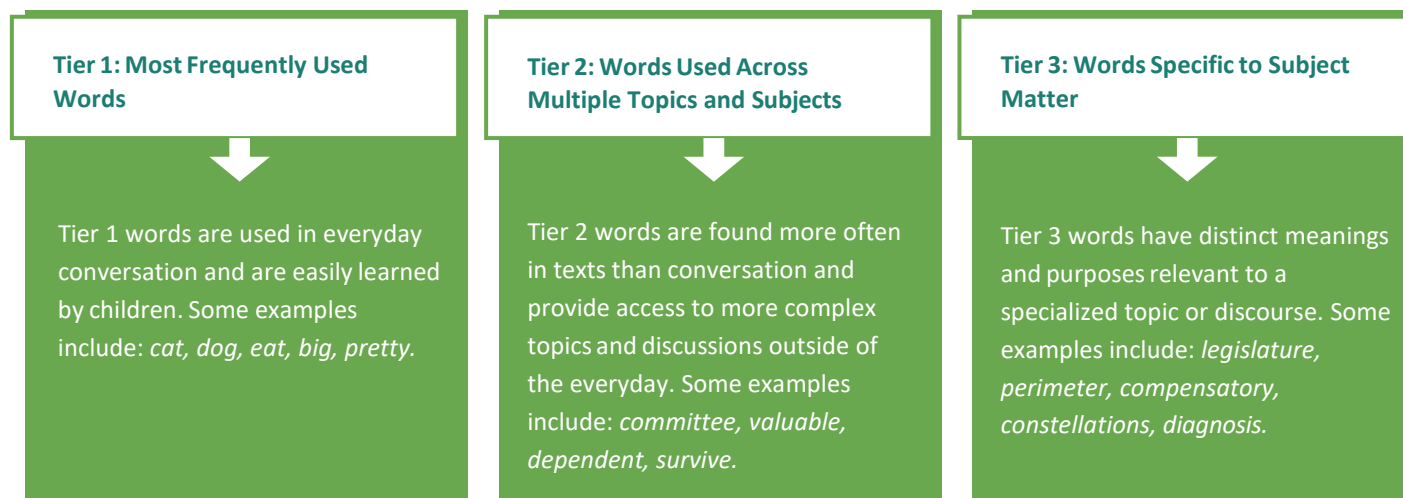
Two aspects of vocabulary knowledge are important: breadth of word knowledge (including words learners have some familiarity with) and depth of word knowledge (the extent to which learners know those words extremely well). Both – breadth and depth – are reliant on prior knowledge and contribute to comprehension (Lambert & Hennessy, 2022). The development of this breadth and depth of vocabulary depends on the oral language environment as well as the life experiences of the learner. Some learners come to school with many rich experiences from which to draw, while others have limited experiences.

Background knowledge is key to children having successful meaning making experiences with text. According to Fellowes and Oakley (2014), “Effective educators constantly help children increase their world knowledge and conceptual knowledge through a range of activities across the curriculum, along with appropriate discussion. They also help children make connections between their existing knowledge, their personal experiences, and what is encountered in texts” (page 295). Building a strong language foundation is integral to academic engagement and subject-area text comprehension because vocabulary concepts are the true “carrier of meaning” (Verhoeven & Perfetti, 2011, page 2) and assume a critical role in learning to read.

The science of reading maintains that vocabulary instruction should not be left to chance, but instead be explicitly taught. The chosen instructional strategies depend on the age and needs of the learner. Oral language precedes written language so, through read alouds, students are able to understand sophisticated words and content before they are able to read it themselves (Education Northwest, 2008). Conversations with intentionality about the books and experiences through student friendly wording and visuals also contribute to a healthy vocabulary.

Multiple experts in the field agree that vocabulary is best taught when learners experience a need to comprehend words and concepts encountered in both fiction and nonfiction texts as well as the world around them. Vocabulary development must be a part of all content-area instruction and involve going beyond dictionary definitions to engage the learner in developing knowledge of a word both in linguistic and nonlinguistic terms. Such instruction ultimately leads to the development of disciplinary literacy in later grades.

The early years, on the other hand, represent an optimal window for vocabulary acceleration and knowledge expansion with daily opportunities to stimulate young learner’s analytical thinking and talking through shared reading and direct instruction. According to Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2013), there are three specific tiers of vocabulary:



Comprehension at the Foundational Level

The whole purpose of reading is to comprehend and construct meaning. Learners must be metacognitive, which means being aware of what and how they are thinking as they uncover the meaning of texts. Comprehension is a complex process whereby the brain is trained to make letters into sounds and words into sentences that process text to connect and facilitate efficient understanding of text (Zwiers, 2010). “A number of recent studies have shown that syntax and grammar are predictors of later reading comprehension ability” (Logan, 2017).

“Syntax refers to the formation of sentences and the associated grammatical rules” (Foorman, et al., 2016). “Syntax skills help us understand how sentences work – the meanings behind word order, structure, and punctuation. By providing supports for developing Syntax skills, we can help readers understand increasingly complex texts” (Learner Variability Project). Over time and through practice this complex process becomes more and more automatic, requiring less of the teacher’s time and attention.

Readers call up worlds of knowledge and associations as they read, triggered by particular ideas, words, or situations. These knowledge structures are known as schemata or background knowledge. Schemata for particular networks of knowledge and information is activated as individuals read and add to their existing schemata as they encounter new information. In addition, their existing schemata influence the ways they approach and make sense of texts.

Schemata, stores of knowledge about texts and about the world, are organized as networks of associations, which can be triggered by a single word. For example, the word *ball* may call up images of baseball diamonds, backstops, and bases, as well as the pitchers, batters, catchers, umps, fielders, and even sports commentators who take part in the game. Even the smells and sounds of baseball stadiums may quickly and automatically come to mind as such images and ideas flood into consciousness. The same word, *ball*, may for another reader call up a completely different schema: images of fancy gowns, corsages, tuxedos, and limousine rides.

Proficient readers know they must relinquish any schema that proves inappropriate as they encounter further information from the text, but less experienced readers will often hold onto inappropriate images that block meaningful



The focus of comprehension instruction is to model for students how to be active in the reading process through monitoring their own use of metacognitive strategies for understanding while reading, writing, listening and speaking. Teachers should help students learn how to use comprehension strategies independently through the gradual release of responsibility. When releasing responsibility to students, however, be mindful that students differ in the extent of modeling or support they need from teachers in order to use strategies effectively.

Shanahan, et al., 2010

connections with the text. Many studies have shown that students with prior knowledge of the topics they will encounter in a text comprehend more of the text and recall more information from it than students who lack this knowledge. Because background knowledge is such a powerful resource for comprehension, many kinds of pre-reading activities, such as giving students pre-reading guides and brief text summaries before they read the text, have been developed as ways to build schemata, thereby increasing student comprehension and retention of information. In addition, educators have developed many ways to activate the knowledge students already have about topics in future reading lessons.

Finally, many studies suggest that in the face of new and competing information, students relinquish their previous conceptions or ideas with great difficulty. Strategies for articulating and challenging misconceptions are important if teachers are to counter the strong but incorrect theories that students hold about many topics (Anderson, 1994).

Literacy at the Secondary Level

Intentional instruction in reading does not stop at the elementary level. In fact, adolescent literacy is often a more complex landscape of instruction for educators due to the varying levels of literacy ability in middle- and high-school classrooms. As more educators are introduced into the student's learning process, there is often a higher need for coordinated efforts from teachers and specialists to address literacy deficiencies in the secondary classroom.

"...secondary reading instruction should go beyond basic skills and strategies... typically emphasized in the elementary school. Recognizing that every content area has its own characteristic literacy practices, [researchers and experts] call for the development of subject-specific reading skills among adolescents, urging secondary teachers to incorporate literacy strategies into subject matter teaching" (Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008).

Comprehension

Teachers must recognize that background knowledge, motivation, and purpose play a key role in the literacy acquisition of all students, particularly students with learning challenges. Reading to young children exposes the learners to various skills and strategies that must be developed for successful reading (National Research Council, 1998).

Fellowes and Oakley (2014, page 295) remind us of the importance of the “...knowledge of the syntax (grammar) and vocabulary of the language, which children initially gain through oral language experiences.” Facilitating comprehension of texts is therefore supported by engaging children in rich learning experiences to develop their oral language.

Having students read text daily (both with and without constructive feedback) facilitates developing reading accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. This should begin as soon as students can identify a few words. Students should interact with a variety of texts, including texts of varied levels, diverse genres, and wide-ranging content. In particular, students should read both information and narrative text, processing the text with the teacher or other students across all grade levels and content areas.

Good readers use many forms of thinking and analyzing text as they read. It is therefore important to teach beginning readers strategies for constructing meaning from text. The discussions that educators engage children in before, during, and after reading/viewing texts are also important. “It is extremely beneficial to talk about the meanings of texts read aloud and to help children notice and think about features of the language used” (Fellowes & Oakley, 2014). The main pedagogical strategies for talking about text include:

- activating and using prior knowledge
- predicting
- visualizing
- asking and answering questions
- summarizing and synthesizing

(<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/childhood/professionals/learning/ecliteracy/emergentliteracy/Pages/makingmeaningandexperiencingideas.aspx#link72>)

Disciplinary Literacy

One of the foundational pedagogical components of disciplinary literacy is understanding that “whether we like it or not, regardless of the content we teach, we are all reading instructors” (Gosner, 2020). The idea is not that content-area teachers should become reading and writing teachers, but rather that they should model the reading and writing practices that are specific to their subjects, so that students are encouraged to read and write like the experts in that content-area. “Content area reading generally views reading tasks as similar across the disciplines. Given that, students can develop a ‘toolbox’ of strategies that can be used no matter the field to help them with comprehension” (Hynd-Shanahan, 2013).

Background Knowledge

According to Dickinson (2010), background or prior knowledge is the warehouse of concepts and experiences we have acquired and continue to acquire throughout our lives. Background knowledge is made up of:

- our personal experiences in the world,
- the lessons we have learned, or not learned,
- our biases,
- the books we have listened to and the books we have read,
- the vocabulary we know, and
- our familiarity with different text and sentence structures.

Dickinson also states that “Background knowledge forms the basis of children’s developing understanding of the world and represents a key building block for reading comprehension. Without context, the words children read cannot map onto anything meaningful. The development of knowledge, early on, must be a central feature of literacy instruction (page 32).”

Disciplinary literacy, however, focuses on the differences between disciplines: what is important to pay attention to, what counts as evidence for an argument, what level of confidence the field has in the knowledge it produces, how texts are organized, how sentences are constructed, and so on. “Disciplinary literacy emphasizes the unique tools that the experts in a discipline use to participate in the work of that discipline. Students then learn how to engage in practices that will help them solve specific problems with disciplinary texts” (Hynd-Shanahan, 2013).

Being literate then in a discipline means not only the knowledge of disciplinary content but also the ability to read, write, think, and reason with texts in discipline-specific ways. It is imperative then that as a basic matter of educator preparation, teachers know how to explain the conventions, formats, styles, and modes of communication of their discipline and how they differ from those that students might encounter elsewhere in school. Research suggests that a rigorous level of professional development is necessary to support educator inquiry into disciplinary literacy and must offer “professional practice around literacy instruction, including integrating comprehension strategies into teacher’s ongoing instruction in order to help students access the academic content and demonstrate understanding in diverse ways” (Greenleaf & Heller, 2007). In order to do so, educators must ensure that curriculum development is motivated by the following aspects (Chauvin & Theodore, 2015):

- Students have authentic purpose and audience.
- Learning has flexible processes and negotiable structures.
- Teachers serve as facilitator (rather than disseminator of knowledge).
- Students are able to interact with experts in the field under investigation (experiential learning).
- Students have ownership of their learning and instruction facilitates student choice.

There is broad agreement that today’s students need different skills than were taught to previous generations, and that cross-disciplinary skills such as writing, critical thinking, self-initiative, group collaboration, and technological literacy are essential to success in higher education, modern workplaces, and adult life. “The stronger the literacy skills, the more likely adults are to hold a full-time job, vote in national elections, participate in community organizations, volunteer in their neighborhoods, and spend time helping their children with their homework” (Greenleaf & Heller, 2007). The explosion of online information of varying quality means that good citizenship now hinges on being able to analyze a tsunami of statistics, graphics, and numbers – both to test competing claims, and to advance new solutions and ideas in the civic space.

Additionally, Goldman et al. (2016) states “The available evidence suggests similar trends for the information literacy skills required to effectively use the Internet, including systematic search and evaluation of search results using general and discipline specific criteria to determine trustworthiness, reliability, credibility, and validity of the information.” Schools need to adapt and develop new ways of teaching and learning that reflect a changing world and educators must use in-school time to teach students how to find, interpret, and use information effectively.

Diverse and Complex Texts

Why the emphasis on challenging and complex text? According to the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (2011), “A significant body of research links the close reading of complex text—whether the student is a struggling reader or advanced—to significant gains in reading proficiency and finds close reading to be a key component of college and career readiness (page 7).”

When selecting challenging and complex texts, let us think about quantitative features—ones that are counted—and qualitative features—aspects such as the language used, complexity of the shared ideas, and other attributes of the text. Additionally, let us think about how challenging the text would be for a specific reader or group of readers and consider a third dimension of text complexity referred to as reader/task factors. These factors focus on the individual reader and

the task or purpose for reading.

Students from all grade levels benefit from instruction that helps build their understanding of the process of close reading and further develops the skills and stamina to read complex texts. All teachers need to create lessons that scaffold student understanding in ways that allow them to read those appropriately complex texts.

Digital Media Literacy

There is broad agreement that today's students need different skills than were perhaps taught to previous generations, and that cross-disciplinary skills such as writing, critical thinking, self-initiative, group collaboration, and technological literacy are essential to success in higher education, modern workplaces, and adult life.

According to Yamamoto and Ananou (2015), education in our time requires the creation and the delivery of instructional content as well as teaching and learning activities that are no longer confined to the four walls of a classroom. Instead, teaching and learning occur in an environment that increasingly includes the internet and developing technology literacy via virtual learning environments. Educators must learn to teach children how to live and work in a new digital society. While teachers may be prepared to teach students to read with printed text, write with a pencil, or speak and listen with a shoulder partner, the reality of a digital world means teachers must also prepare students to read and interact with digital text, knowing when to click a hyperlink; how to distinguish an advertisement from text; how to write effectively through email or a text; how to speak and listen through a podcast, or communicate in a live face-to-face application.

The explosion of online information of varying quality means that good citizenship now hinges on being able to analyze a multitude of statistics, graphics, and numbers – both to test competing claims, and to advance new solutions and ideas in the civic space. As Goldman et al. (2016) states, “The available evidence suggests similar trends for the information literacy skills required to effectively use the Internet, including systematic search and evaluation of search results using general and discipline specific criteria to determine trustworthiness, reliability, credibility, and validity of the information.”

English Language Learners

Based on research in second language acquisition, we know that ELs need explicit and systematic instruction in decoding with many opportunities to read and listen to strong reading models (e.g., read aloud) across a variety of genres. ELs need to develop their oral language and linguistic comprehension through dialog with students and adults to build their knowledge about diverse topics.

These skills should also be explicitly taught to help ELs develop broad academic, instructional, and social vocabulary, so they become skilled readers and thinkers. Therefore, strategic and purposeful attention must be given to developing ELs' oral language and building world knowledge on a variety of topics so they can become skilled readers who comprehend the text they read and who are motivated to explore independent reading because they enjoy it. In addition, science of reading instruction for ELs requires careful attention to metalanguage and cross linguistic transfer between the native language and English.

English language learners also require competent teachers who use culturally and linguistically responsive instruction and differentiate instruction for language and literacy. Given that bilinguals already have negotiated multiple languages prior to coming to school, one may presume that our approach to literacy development would indeed have to be different. Using science of reading, evidence-based practices through programs such as LETRS®, coupled with best

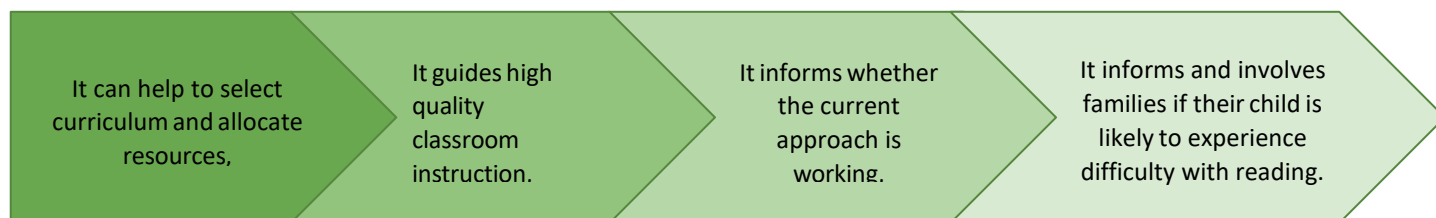
practices for first language and biliteracy instruction is the necessary approach to impact early learning trajectories and to provide a quality equitable education for ELs.

ASSESSMENT

An effective assessment system requires the knowledge and skills of all stakeholders to interpret and use assessment data. To determine the effectiveness of data, students, teachers, and administrators should be knowledgeable and proficient in analyzing data to make informed, data-driven decisions. Understanding the role and function of a quality assessment system, how assessments are designed and measured, and how to interpret data for instructional modification helps ensure a valid, reliable, and sustainable assessment system. Students, teachers, and administrators must understand the role assessment plays in curriculum and instruction, as well as the types and purposes of assessment.

A coordinated and comprehensive assessment system in which different tools are used for different purposes is a vital and necessary component of this framework. Quality literacy assessments include implementation and analysis of a variety of assessment types. National, state, local, summative, interim, and formative data sources all provide meaningful information about the effectiveness of literacy instruction. All literacy assessments are best used in combination with evidence-based effective practices, as well as teacher observation and reflection to monitor individual student progress.

All Missouri school districts are required to collect literacy screening data to inform stakeholders how they serve students. Objective data from a valid, predictive, and reliable early literacy screener directs exactly where focus is necessary in order to ensure educational equity. We know that when our early screening data is used effectively:



The Purpose of High-Quality, Authentic Literacy Assessment

High-quality, authentic literacy assessments provide many benefits. These include:

- demonstrating student proficiency in ELA standards;
- identifying student strengths and weaknesses;
- assisting in planning and guiding instruction, including intervention and enrichment;
- enabling collaboration and communication among administrators, teachers, students, and parents;
- assisting in goal setting for districts, buildings, teachers, and students; and
- assisting in evaluating ELA/literacy curriculum.

Multiple formative, interim, and summative assessments are needed to form a comprehensive and coordinated assessment system. All are an integral part of gathering information on student understanding of the skills and knowledge identified in the standards. Additionally, an accurate assessment has an established purpose and intended audience. It uses clear and appropriate learning standards and has purposeful design. If an assessment is to be used effectively, educational personnel must consider how the results are used, communicated, and reported.

Information about student learning is important to many stakeholders. Each stakeholder counts on the availability of

accurate information about student learning to measure growth. A key component in this discussion is comparing formative and summative assessments. The following table presents questions that help distinguish between formative and summative assessment uses (adapted with permission from Chappuis, 2009).

Formative vs. Summative Assessment

FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT	SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT
a process	a single measurement
during instruction	at the end of instruction
results used to adjust teaching and learning strategies	results used to evaluate student performance
assessment <i>for learning</i>	assessment <i>of learning</i>

Formative Assessments (Assessment FOR Learning)

Formative assessments are informal processes that gather information about student learning during a lesson or unit of study. They are directly linked to instructional practices and focus on discovering what students know and are able to do in light of targeted Missouri Learning Standards. Teachers administer formative assessments, change or adapt instruction based on results, and if necessary, reassess to determine the impact of instruction on student learning. One of the most valuable assets of formative assessment for students is the critical descriptive feedback it provides for individual student goal setting and subsequent tracking of the student's learning. The intended audiences for these assessments are students and teachers. Formative assessments are not intended to be included in the grading process or used to judge teacher performance.

Summative Assessments (Assessment OF Learning)

Summative assessments are used to measure student performance on a specified number of Missouri Learning Standards at a specific point in time after instruction has ended. Summative assessments are given as end-of-unit or final project-based assessments, final exams, and placement tests. Additional examples of summative assessments include district benchmark or interim assessments, state-mandated assessments, and national assessments.

Evaluating Quality, Authentic Assessments

Assessing literacy is a complex task. Assessments should reflect the multiple dimensions of reading and writing and the various purposes for assessment, as well as the diversity of the students being assessed. Because of the variety of assessment options available to districts and teachers—formal/informal, formative/summative, teacher created/commercial—it is essential to evaluate whether the particular assessments being used are aligned to the intended purpose and provide results that inform teaching and learning (Yale Center for Teaching and Learning, 2018).

One effective way to evaluate the assessment system is to complete assessment audits at the district, building, and classroom levels. An assessment audit provides teachers and districts with an opportunity to critically review

assessments, ensure they are useful and timely, and ensure the intended information is understood by the audience. The audit provides a snapshot of large-scale assessments and screenings administered at each grade level each year. And when combined or shared with other grade levels and schools within the district, the audit can provide a clearer picture of a student's experience.

When thinking of commercial- or teacher-created assessments, it is critical to offer students multiple opportunities/modalities to demonstrate what they have learned. Often literacy richness is overly simplified by assessments that are not multidimensional or authentic, such as the overuse of multiple-choice questions or assessments not embedded in an authentic context. Educators may find the lack of authenticity of these assessments frustrating when results do not appear to represent what their students know and can do (Munger, 2016).

Developing/Selecting Quality Classroom Assessments

In its 2018 position statement "Literacy Assessment: Definitions, Principles, and Practices," the National Council of Teachers of English states, "Literacy assessment is an integral part of literacy teaching and learning; that literacy assessment contributes to the conditions for literacy teaching and learning; and that professional knowledge about literacy assessment is a critical component of a literacy teacher's development and practice."

An educator's development or selection of assessments should take into consideration the positive impact on classroom instruction that, in turn, will have a positive impact on student achievement. The NCTE, in the 2018 position statement, recognizes implications for assessment practices.

- Teachers and schools select and create purpose-driven, site-specific assessments.
- Students receive feedback and teachers receive data regarding next steps in the learning progression through the literacy assessments.
- Students engage in literacy assessment as self-reflective literacy learners. Literacy reflective practices include an understanding and appreciation of literacy assessment, of why it is important, and of how it works, thus contributing to student learning through relevant and meaningful activities. Teachers help students become self-reflective.
- Students develop reflective habits of mind, enhancing their learning in literacy classrooms, in classrooms in other disciplines, and later, in the workplace.
- Students participate in literacy assessment, for example, by monitoring and assessing their own learning, often with guidance, and engaging in or leading learning conferences about their work.
- Parents are knowledgeable about and involved in literacy assessment processes for their children and their school, for example, by preparing their children for learning, advocating for their children as learners, and participating in ongoing assessment conversations about their children's learning.

Whether teachers are administering classroom assessments that are pre-designed, choosing items from an existing item bank to create an assessment, or preparing assessments themselves, assessment-literate teachers should be skilled in designing, administering, scoring, and interpreting the results of assessments. Realizing the magnitude of this work, educators need to keep the following components in mind:

- Purpose of the assessment
- Alignment to Missouri Learning Standards
- Appropriateness of rigor
- Complexity/variety of texts used in the assessment
- Opportunities to practice with various question/item types
- Authenticity of assessment task(s)

- Usefulness of assessment results for targeted instruction
- Reflecting on what assessments show

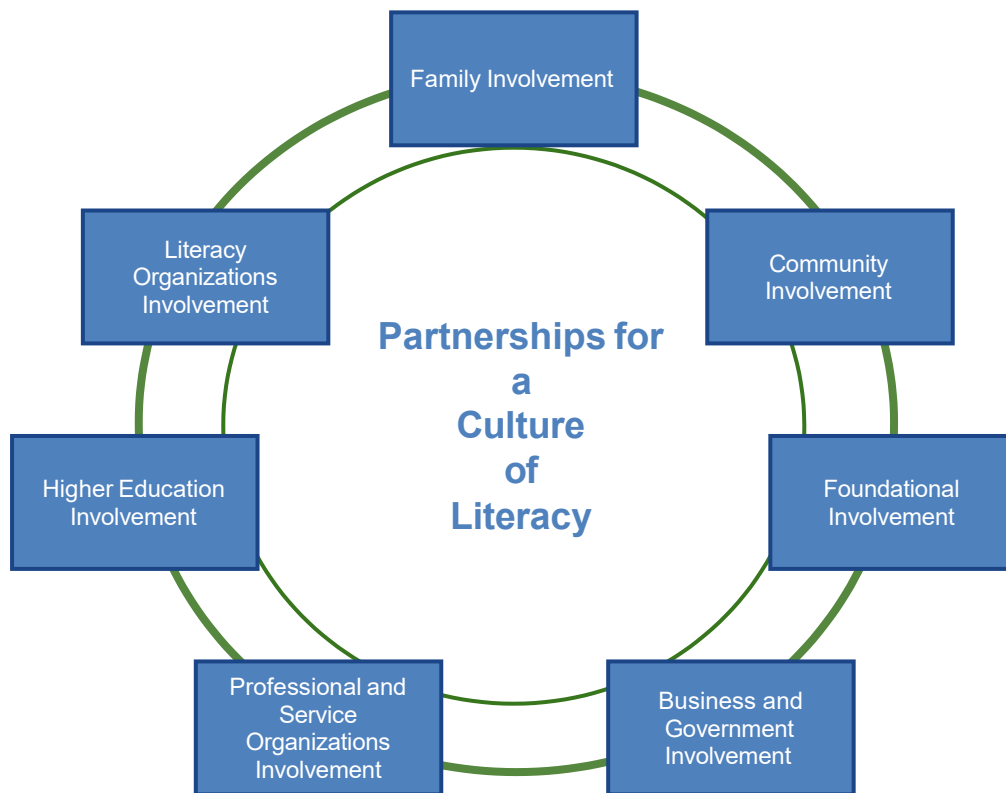
Chappuis (2009) provides the following questions to consider regarding when to select formative and summative assessments.

ASSESSMENT USER	FORMATIVE (FOR LEARNING)	SUMMATIVE (OF LEARNING)
Students	Where am I now? Where am I going? / What are my goals? How will I know when I get there? How can I close the gap?	Did I meet my learning goal(s)? Did I meet the learning standard(s)? Is my score a true reflection of what I know and am able to do?
Teachers	What do my students need? What are my students' successes and challenges? How will I adjust my instruction to meet student needs? How do I collaborate with other teachers, administrators, students, and parents during the learning process?	What grade do I put on the report card? What support services might students need? How do I communicate student learning results with other teachers, administrators, students, and parents?
Parents	What can we do to support my child's learning? Is my child making progress toward the standards?	Did my child meet the standards? How does my school's performance compare to district, state, and national performance?
Principals	Are teachers adjusting instruction based on formative data to meet the needs of all students? Are students actively involved in their learning through assessment?	Is instruction producing the desired results? Are our students meeting the standards? What additional resources/supports are needed to ensure success? Is the curriculum producing the desired results?
Superintendents	Are all buildings implementing effective formative assessments across the district?	Does our written curriculum match the learned curriculum? Do the assessment results match the expectations of the written curriculum? How does achievement data affect curricular decisions? What additional resources/supports are needed to ensure success?
Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education		Are Missouri students achieving the literacy standards? What supports/structures for Missouri teachers are needed to enhance student literacy achievement?
Citizens		How does our literacy achievement data compare to others locally, across the state, nationally, and internationally?

PARTNERSHIPS

According to Dennis Van Roekel, former National Education Association president, “No single education stakeholder group can do the job ahead . . . it will take all of us—teachers, education support professionals, principals, superintendents, school board members, parents, families, government leaders, business leaders, faith-based leaders” (National Education Association, 2011).

Partnerships among schools and local businesses, community organizations, and other educational entities are essential components in fostering a culture of literacy. Each community offers unique opportunities for relationships and collaboration. The strength of any literacy program is reflected in the school district's ability to seek and build the



Family Involvement

According to the 2006 Harvard Family Research Project, researchers Dearing, Kreider, Simpkins, and Weiss found that increases in family involvement in the school predicted increases in literacy achievement. Additionally, family involvement in school matters most for children in their early years. More specifically, Dearing and colleagues found that if families who were initially uninvolved in the school became more involved, their children's literacy improved. Their results indicated that even one or two additional involvement activities per year were associated with meaningful improvements for children. The impact is the same regardless of ethnic background, family income, maternal level of education, or child's gender (Jeynes, 2005).

Community Involvement

Community involvement includes partnerships with various community members including parents, other family members/guardians, childcare providers, volunteers, homework centers, and other entities contributing to the child's development—particularly in literacy. Strong and effective Parent Teacher Associations/Parent Teacher Organizations, local libraries, and community outreach organizations often work together to educate the whole child. In addition, these groups may help raise money for special projects, volunteer time for school activities, and host literacy special events.

Business and Government Involvement

Large and small local businesses can work in conjunction with schools to promote literacy. Examples of these partnerships include larger corporations that may offer significant book grants and continued scholarships to teachers and/or students (e.g., through professional development funding or book donations). Small businesses are often more familiar partners in education. They may join schools and classrooms in sponsoring literacy events and sharing information about their businesses with students.

Schools have the opportunity to involve local government stakeholders in literacy councils and may choose to send staff representatives to statewide literacy councils. The key to a successful business and government partnership is seeking the institutions in one's own community or seeking literacy opportunities at government entities such as the Department that are dedicated to school and student success.

Foundation Involvement

Multiple charitable organizations across the nation, state, and community have literacy foundations that provide books and other literacy materials to students in need. Like business and government involvement, foundations may provide grants for teachers' continued education or district-wide literacy needs.

Professional and Service Organizations Involvement

Professional organizations can promote literacy and teacher education through scholarships, materials donations, and information. Educators have opportunities to become active members in teacher organizations, many of which offer content-specific educational resources. While this option may require a more active role by the educator, the reward in collaborating with like-minded, like-content professionals can be invaluable. Community service organizations and clubs may focus on literacy and have scholarships and grants available. State and local libraries and library councils partner with schools, ensuring that books are available for students and teachers.

Higher Education Involvement

Schools benefit from partnering with nearby colleges and universities through student teaching programs, professional development programs, and literacy-related research efforts. In addition, professional development through both coursework and targeted workshops is available through higher education institutions. Some colleges and universities offer Regional Professional Development Centers that partner with local schools to conduct research, provide teacher professional development, and/or provide services that can benefit both entities.

Literacy Organizations Involvement

Many literacy organizations (both professional and private sector) provide not only literacy information but also literacy materials and supplies. Schools and individual staff members can benefit from partnering with these organizations through their research journals, instructional ideas, book donations, and scholarships.

EDUCATOR PREPARATION, RECRUITMENT, AND RETENTION

The Path Forward: An Initiative in Educator Preparation Aligned to Missouri's Read, Lead, Exceed Project

1. In collaboration with a few Educator Preparation Program (EPP) leaders, the department created a plan—*Path Forward*—for updating literacy instruction in Missouri's Educator Preparation Programs.
2. In order to oversee this project, the department created the Early Literacy Council. This group of 13 educational leaders from around the state includes representatives from P-12 and EPPs, practitioners, and administrators. The Council then developed a job description for Early Literacy Fellows and distributed applications. Over 30 applications were received. From the applications, eight Early Literacy Fellows were selected to participate in the initiative.
3. The eight Early Literacy Fellows are from across the state and are currently involved in literacy instruction in both

P-12 and higher education. The group includes:

- a. Four who have completed Volume 1 of LETRS® Training, and two who have continued to become trained facilitators.
 - b. Four Fellows who are currently teaching P-12 and one who taught in P-12 within the last two years.
 - c. Two Fellows who are proficient in Spanish and have experience in English language acquisition (working with English language learners).
 - d. Representatives from various types of institutions of higher learning, including: large public R-I, regional comprehensive, historically black college or university, and small private.
 - e. Representatives from several regions across Missouri, including: Southwest, Southeast, Central, Metro St. Louis, and Metro Kansas City.
4. The Fellows have developed revised competencies for literacy instruction in the certification areas of Elementary, Early Childhood, Early Childhood Special Education, and Mild/Moderate Cross-Categorical Special Education. Those competencies have been reviewed by the Early Literacy Council and the Missouri Board for Educator Preparation, with plans to take them to the Missouri Advisory Council of Certification for Educators, the Commissioner, and the Board in early 2023. The revised competencies will provide EPPs with more explicit literacy objectives for their candidates. Current competencies are few (seven) and vague (only one to seven words), so the new competencies will help to guide teacher preparation more directly. These new competencies will also allow for a clearer, more valid alignment between goals and assessment, providing the department with a more accurate picture of what candidates are learning.
 5. Having completed the development of new, more specific competencies for literacy instruction, the Fellows shifted their attention to reviewing assessment of literacy competencies. Current assessments will be reviewed to consider options for revisions or additions. A summary of this review will be shared in spring 2023.
 6. The department recently accepted applications for grants related to improving literacy instruction in teacher preparation. The Early Literacy Council reviewed the applications and, ultimately, awarded over \$200,000 to nine EPPs who will carry out their projects over the next year. Grant awardees will gather data on various aspects of their initiatives and submit a report for broad dissemination in fall 2023. In the spring of 2024, the Department will sponsor a conference in which participating EPPs will share the results of their work so that successful aspects can be replicated, if possible.

STEPS FORWARD

OFFICE OF LITERACY

The passing of [SB 681](#) established an Office of Literacy and a Literacy Advisory Council which will oversee the development and implementation of literacy initiatives state-wide. Per the legislation, the Department will provide “necessary staff and resources for the work of the Literacy Advisory Council, teacher candidates will also receive training in the selection and use of reading curricula and instructional materials; the administration and interpretation of assessments; how to translate assessment results into effective practice in the classroom specific to the needs of students; and best practices in the field of literacy instruction as recommended by the Literacy Advisory Council.”

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

To meet the requirements of [SB 681](#) and remain current with research and implementation, the Department will continue updating and maintaining a list of recommended and vetted materials and resources aligned with the science of

reading, as part of the *Steps to Success* series.

EDUCATOR TRAINING

Training high-quality educators (including administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals) is vital for student success. SB 681 requires a strategic, long-term approach that connects and aligns pre-service teacher preparation, onboarding and mentoring, and ongoing professional development. An innovative, clear, and shared focus must be integrated to prepare all educators to effectively implement instructional practices grounded in the science of reading. To do so, the department will partner with teacher education programs, ensuring the alignment of literacy and reading instruction coursework for future educators. This includes incorporating evidence-based literacy instructional materials, including the science of reading materials.

To provide all educators with the ongoing training necessary to promote literacy across all grade levels and content areas, the department will broaden the scope of LETRS® training to include not only K-3 teachers but also grades four and five, early childhood, English as a Second Language, Special Education, and English Language Arts.

LITERACY COACHES

The department is also providing additional literacy coaches to each Missouri RPDC. The literacy instructional coaches’ primary role will be to:

- Support the RPDCs’ LETRS® training by directly working with teacher participants, to ensure an effective transfer of skills learned in professional development.
- Work with teachers to support best practices in using data to make data-informed decisions, provide analysis of school-wide trends in instruction, and make recommendations about potential next steps to address areas of need.
- Observe instructional delivery and provide feedback to enhance and support the development of each teacher's content area.
- Take a hands-on approach to improving instruction and effectiveness by working at various levels (classroom-, school-, state-wide) to directly improve literacy instruction, student learning, and foster teacher development. This may include modeling lessons in classrooms, helping teacher groups plan instruction, creating system-wide policies and procedures, and facilitating professional development.

DISTRICT OUTCOMES

Short-term Outcomes (1 year after SLP is adopted)	Mid-term Outcomes (2 years after SLP is adopted)	Long-term Outcomes (3 years after SLP is adopted and ongoing)
• Definition/diagram of comprehensive and integrated approach to literacy instruction • Local literacy planning tools and resources • Increased local capacity to develop literacy plans • Increased professional learning that supports literacy achievement	• Local literacy lead agencies identified • Increased capacity to implement local literacy plans	• Improved student achievement in literacy • Sustaining literacy supports and professional learning

A CALL TO ACTION

As Henry Ford said, “Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.” There are many research studies and articles available about the efficacy of explicit phonics training, as well as other aspects of the science of reading. As we learn together, we will use this knowledge to achieve our goal and exceed in every aspect of literacy development at every level.

A district literacy plan anchored to current scientific research on literacy instruction is an essential blueprint for improving student literacy. An effective plan requires the consideration of the literacy needs and expectations of the district and community, resources needed to support literacy development, implementation of curriculum, instruction and assessment, and the use of on-going reflection around data.

Writing an effective literacy plan is not easy; however, once operationalized, a literacy plan allows all members of the school and community to understand the district’s goals for the future, its current status, the actions necessary to reach the goals, shared roles and responsibilities, and measurement of success.

In a technology-based, globalized world, a highly literate citizenry is needed for Missouri’s economic growth and prosperity. To this end, preparing Missouri students for lifelong learning and college and career readiness is a shared responsibility of state policymakers, districts, buildings, families, and the community. The next resource in our Step to Success Series, *Designing Your Comprehensive Literacy Plan: A Framework for LEAs*, provides clear guidance on the components of a comprehensive literacy plan as well as resources to build, implement, and strengthen literacy for all students.

APPENDIX A

COMMON VOCABULARY

This vocabulary list contains operational definitions based on professional literature as well as practitioner-organized uses of the terms, and was created through a joint collaboration of the Department and Missouri literacy consultants to provide consistency across the state in the discussion of literacy.

Adolescent Literacy

Literacy at the middle and high school levels (reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills) to meet grade-level standards.

Alphabetic Principle

The foundation of any alphabetic writing system connecting letters with their sounds to read and write. Letters and letter patterns represent the sounds of spoken language that are foundational for phonic decoding and orthographic mapping.

Assessment

Gathering information from a variety of sources to determine what students know, understand, and can do with their knowledge.

Benchmark Assessments

Also called interim assessments; intended to be administered at set interval points, evaluating students against specific grade-level standards and learning goals. Benchmark assessments can be summative in nature.

Diagnostic Assessments

Tests that can be used to measure a variety of reading, language, or cognitive skills. They are designed to provide a more precise and detailed picture of the full range of a child's knowledge and skills so that instruction can be more precisely planned.

Formative Assessments

Assessments designed to provide feedback to students and teachers and to inform instruction during the instructional process while learning is occurring. Examples include observations of student responses, questioning routines, and work samples. These may be standardized or non-standardized and can be used for both teacher and students.

Non-Standardized Assessments

Assessments that are informal, less structured, and include methods such as observations, rubrics, exit slips, checklists, portfolios, work samples, and ratings; often completed while observing children in their natural environments.

Screening Measures (Screeners)

Assessments that are used to efficiently identify children's general levels of learning in relation to a benchmark standard or identified level of performance; often includes selected predictive indicators of future learning.

Screening

Brief assessment that focuses on critical reading skills strongly predictive of future reading growth and development. It is a "first alert" that a child may need extra help to make adequate progress in reading during the year.

Standardized Assessments

Assessments that are designed to sample children's skills within a prescribed domain under controlled conditions. These are given the same way each time (developed empirically, with adequate norms, definite instructions for administration, and evidence of reliability and validity).

Summative Assessments

Assessments that take place after the learning has been completed to provide information that sums up the teaching and/or learning process. Examples include normative and benchmark testing and the end-of-unit or theme testing. These are more likely to be standardized but may be non-standardized.

Automaticity

The process of recognizing words quickly (within two seconds) and effortlessly (without conscious attention).

Curriculum

Standards-based sequence of planned experiences during which students practice and achieve proficiency in content and applied learning skills.

Decoding

Translating a word from print to speech, usually by employing knowledge of sound-symbol correspondences; structural analysis practice to identify word parts and multisyllabic words.

Developmentally Appropriate

Practices that are suitable to a student's age and developmental status and that meet the cognitive, emotional, and physical needs of the child's individual strengths and weaknesses.

Disciplinary Literacy

The unique way in which each discipline (content area) uses text to create, disseminate, and evaluate knowledge.

Evidence-Based

Approaches to prevention or treatment that are validated by documented scientific evidence. Control groups are used to prove a positive correlation found in research. Evidence-based programs have proven effective over time.

Fluency

Ability to read effortlessly with appropriate rate, accuracy, expression, and prosody.

Foundational Skills

A set of skills (alphabet, concept of print, phonological awareness, phonics, high-frequency words, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) students must master before they can become readers. These skills are necessary and important components of effective reading instruction designed to develop proficient readers with the capacity to comprehend texts across a range of types and disciplines.

Grade Level

Refers to the grade in which a child is placed and the expectations for students in that grade. *On grade level* refers to the proficiency in state learning standards (numerical level of students K, 1, 2, etc.). *Note: The phrase on grade level can vary by state. If a child moves during the school year, the original grade-level parameters may not apply.*

Graphemes

Letter or letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word.

High-Frequency Words

Words that occur most frequently in written material.

Instruction

- **Explicit Instruction**
Instruction designed and delivered by clear teacher modeling and scaffolded guidance with students before tasks are expected to be completed independently.
- **Intentional Instruction**
Instruction that has a specific purpose, outcome, or goal in mind for learners' development and learning.
- **Systematic Instructions**
Instruction showing a methodical procedure; a formulated and thoughtful approach in a carefully planned sequence progressing from simpler to more complex skills.

Intervention

A focused instructional program or plan based on data to meet students' individual reading and writing needs. Intervention is supplemental to existing Tier I instruction.

Language Comprehension

An individual's ability to derive meaning from language whether written or spoken.

Literacy

The ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials across disciplines and in any context (International Literacy Association, 2016).

- **Structured Literacy**
Distinctive in the principles that guide how critical elements are taught; systematic and cumulative; explicit instruction; and diagnostic teaching. It refers to programs that contain the following components, which are proven to improve reading skills, and are appropriate for all students (phonology, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax, and semantics).

Morphemes

The meaningful morphological units of language (word parts) that cannot be further divided.

Morphology

The study of the forms and structures of words.

Orthography

The conventional spelling system of a language; written system that represents language.

Orthographic Mapping

The mental process used to store words for immediate and effortless retrieval. It requires phonemic awareness and letter sound knowledge and is the mechanism for sight word learning.

Phonemes

The smallest distinct unit of sound in language.

Phonemic Awareness

The ability to recognize the individual speech sounds/phonemes in words and be able to manipulate those sounds.

Phonics

The study of the relationships between letters and the sounds they represent; also used as a descriptor for code-based instruction.

Phonological Awareness (PA)

Having an awareness of sounds in spoken words, whether syllables, onsets, rimes, or individual phonemes.

Reading Comprehension

Making meaning of text that is viewed, read, or heard. Comprehension includes understanding what is expressed outright or implied as well as interpreting what is viewed, read, or heard by drawing on one's knowledge and experiences. Comprehension may also involve application and critical examination of the message in terms of intent, rhetorical choices, and credibility.

Research-Based

An instructional method (such as a particular approach or specific strategy), grounded in research, which has a record of success to suggest that when this instruction is used with a particular group of children, they can be expected to make adequate gains in reading achievement.

Science of Reading

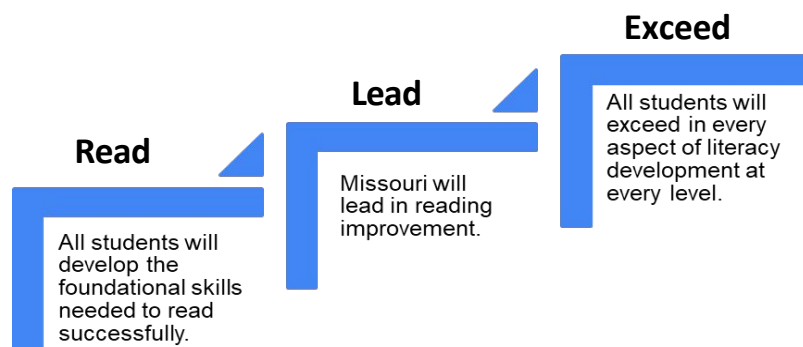
The science of reading is based on over 40 years of research in neuroscience, psychology, education, and linguistics on how the brain learns to process written language and on how to teach reading and writing systematically, intentionally, and explicitly so that all students learn to read and communicate well. This evidence-based research shows that students need to learn the sounds letters represent; connect the letters of the alphabet that go with these sounds; learn letter patterns that help them decode and spell words; read smoothly with expression; and comprehend/make sense out of words, sentences, and paragraphs. These skills are the tools students need in order to be purposeful, fluent readers and communicators throughout life.

Sight Word

Any word a child knows instantly and automatically by sight. (This will be unique for each individual.)

Small-Group Instruction

Flexible grouping of students based on skill needs for the five components of reading with information gathered from data.



RECOMMENDED READINGS

A list of recommended reading materials on the topic of literacy may be found [here](#).

APPENDIX B

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The following document is a quick reference guide that provides high level information on literacy legislation that the Board, the Department, and LEAs are required to implement per SB 681 and 662 (Sections 161.241, 167.268, 167.640, 167.645, 170.014, and 186.080, RSMo). This reference guide is designed to inform stakeholders about the literacy components related to SB 681 that will ultimately support educators in making informed decisions about literacy instructional practices. The Department has developed guidance on the various stakeholder roles that support the statute's implementation. The Department has created the chart below to help educators understand requirements. Educators are encouraged to read SB 681 in its entirety ([SB 681](#)).

Section 186.080, RSMo: "The commissioner of education shall establish a literacy advisory council."

The Board / The Department

- The Commissioner of Education shall establish the Literacy Advisory Council consisting of no more than 20 members.
- Provide necessary staff and resources for the work of the Literacy Advisory Council.
- Convene council meetings at least two times per year to review best practices in literacy instruction and related policy provisions.
 - The Literacy Advisory Council shall periodically provide recommendations to the Commissioner and Board regarding any identified improvements to literacy instruction and policy for students.
 - The Literacy Advisory Council shall collaborate to fulfill statutory requirements.

Section 161.241.1, RSMo: "The state board of education in collaboration with the coordinating board for higher education and the commissioner's advisory council under section 186.080, shall develop a plan to establish a comprehensive system of services for reading instruction."

The Board/ The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
• Provide guidance and technical assistance related to diagnostic assessment data and interventions. • Provide a list of state-approved reading assessments. • Provide empirical-based professional learning opportunities and instructional strategies shown to be successful for students with persistent reading difficulties. • Provide a list of research-based instructional materials for students with persistent reading difficulties and that align with evidence-based reading instruction.	• Provide teacher and leader training in evidence-based reading strategies for students with persistent reading difficulties. • Develop a protocol for providing intensive intervention based on diagnostic data for students.	• Implement intensive interventions for students identified as needing an Reading Success Plan. • Implement a communication process for teachers and parents to discuss RSPs. • Maintain RSP-related assessment and intervention documentation.	• Follow LEA level protocol for implementing legislative requirements of RSPs. • Maintain RSP-related assessment and intervention documentation. • Meet with parents and/or guardians to review RSPs.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 161.241.2, RSMo: “The state board of education shall establish and periodically update a statewide literacy plan that supports high quality, evidence-based reading instruction for all students.”

The Board/ The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
• Create a series of documents which provide guidance and technical assistance regarding the requirements for literacy instruction in Missouri. • Develop a framework for LEAs that provides resources and support.	• Use the statewide literacy plan to guide the development of a District Literacy Plan. • Develop LEA-level protocol to implement legislative requirements for state and district literacy plans. • Train leaders on the LEA protocol. • Ensure schools follow the LEA protocol.	• Align literacy practices to the District Literacy Plan. • Train educators on the District Literacy Plan and various LEA literacy protocols. • Follow LEA-level protocol for implementing legislative requirements of the District Literacy Plan. • Ensure teachers follow the LEA protocol.	• Review and implement the District Literacy Plan • Participate in LEA/school training on the District Literacy Plan and various protocols for implementing legislative requirements. • Follow LEA-level protocol for implementing legislative requirements of the District Literacy Plan.

Section 161.241.3, RSMo: “The state board of education shall create an office of literacy. The commissioner of education shall coordinate staff with roles relating to literacy and align staff work around supporting best practices in reading instruction.”

The Board / The Department

- Plan, develop, and coordinate all aspects of department-led literacy initiatives across the state.
- Collaborate with the Literacy Advisory Council and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education.
- Coordinate staff with roles relating to literacy practices in reading instruction.
- Align staff work around supporting best practices in reading instruction.

Section 161.241.4 and 161.097, RSMo: “The state board of education shall align literacy and reading instruction coursework for teacher education programs as required under subsection 4 of section 161.097.”

The Board / The Department

- Analyze data to evaluate current educator preparation programs in literacy instruction.
- Propose and inform literacy-based policy revisions.
- Develop and/or revise literacy competencies to align to: (a) the core components of reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and vocabulary; (b) oral and written language development; and (c) identification of reading deficiencies, dyslexia, and other language difficulties.
- Develop and/or revise the alignment of literacy competencies by: (a) selecting and using aligned reading curricula and instructional materials; (b) administering and interpreting assessments; (c) addressing how to translate assessment results into effective practice in the classroom specific to the needs of students; and (d) additional best practices in the field of literacy instruction as recommended by the Literacy Advisory Council pursuant to Section 186.080, RSMo.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 161.241.5, RSMo: “Subject to appropriations, The department of elementary and secondary education shall recruit and employ quality teacher trainers with expertise in reading instruction and provide opportunities for evidence-based professional development in reading instruction available to all active teachers.”

The Board/ The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
● Provide and support literacy consultants and coaches in each of the RPDC. ● Literacy consultants and coaches will: ○ Provide classroom instruction support and teacher training. ○ Provide training and support for district literacy coaches. ○ Lead professional learning across the state.	● As needed, utilize RPDC consultants to support instruction and assessment in literacy. ● Collaborate with the Department and the RPDCs to assign literacy coaches and consultants throughout the LEA.	● Collaborate with the LEA to assign literacy coaches and consultants to support literacy in the school.	● Work closely with the literacy coach and/or literacy consultant to support literacy (e.g. plan lessons). ● Implement evidence-based literacy instructional strategies.

Section 161.241.6, RSMo: “The department shall maintain and publish data on reading outcomes. provided that the report shall not include individually identifiable student data.”

The Board/ The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
● Maintain and publish data on reading outcomes, provided that the report shall not include individually identifiable student data. ● Establish a data collection structure for the beginning and end-of-year literacy data. ● Analyze statewide data to inform stakeholders on improvement needs and efforts.	● Submit timely assessment data to the Department. ● Monitor and analyze the assessment results and intervention processes. ● Train leaders on the reporting process and templates. ● Analyze LEA data to inform stakeholders on improvement efforts.	● Provide professional learning opportunities on implementing assessments and interpreting resulting data. ● Administer a Department-approved literacy pre-assessment within the first 30 days of the school year and a literacy post-assessment 30 days prior to the end of the school year to determine student reading progression in grades K-3 or as required in a student’s RSP.	● Participate in professional development on implementing assessments and interpreting resulting data. ● Utilize assessment data to identify student reading proficiencies. ● Provide intensive intervention for students identified with reading deficiencies.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 161.241.7, RSMo: “The department shall publish criteria and examples to help districts and schools select and use evidence-based reading curricula and instructional materials.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
- Research and develop an instructional materials evaluation process and guidelines. - Develop evaluation criteria and a rubric for instructional materials that aligns with the Missouri State Learning Standards and the evidence-based reading instruction. - Collect and evaluate materials using the rubric developed from established criteria. - Publish a list of instructional materials aligned to evidenced-based instructional practices.	- Determine if the LEA’s current instructional materials meet the Department-identified criteria. - If new instructional materials are necessary, use the list of instructional materials that align with evidence-based reading instruction. - Provide professional learning on how to implement the instructional materials with fidelity.	- Form a team to evaluate building-level instructional materials for evidence-based reading alignment. - Determine if the school’s current instructional materials meet the Department identified criteria. - If new instructional materials are necessary, use the list of instructional materials that align with evidence-based reading instruction identified by the Department. - Provide professional learning on how to implement the instructional materials with fidelity.	- Participate in building-level instructional materials evaluation for alignment to evidence-based reading using the Department-created rubric. - Implement with fidelity the evidence-based reading instructional materials. - Participate in professional learning focused on the effective implementation of the instructional resource.

Section 161.241.7, RSMo: “Additionally, the department shall publish a list of curricula that ensure instruction is explicit, systematic, diagnostic, and based on phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and semantics. This shall be resource to districts.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
Publish a list of Department-approved instructional materials that align with evidence-based literacy instruction.	- Apply the Department-approved published list when selecting district-level literacy resources. - Provide for professional development opportunities regarding the implementation of selected literacy resources.	- Apply the Department-approved published list when selecting district-level literacy resources at the school level. - Provide for professional development opportunities regarding the implementation of selected literacy resources at the school level.	- Apply the Department-approved published list when selecting district-level literacy resources in the classroom. - Participate in professional development opportunities regarding the implementation of selected literacy resources.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 161.241.8, RSMo: “The department shall provide online tools and training for active teachers on evidence-based reading instruction.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
● Maintain the Department’s Virtual Learning Platform (VLP)- Online evidence-based reading instruction teacher training resource. ● Collect data on the utilization of the Department’s VLP.	● Inform and provide opportunity of access to the Department’s VLP.	● Inform and provide opportunity of access to the Department VLP.	● Participate in the Department VLP training to learn about evidence- based reading instruction.

Section 161.241.9, RSMo: There is hereby created in the state treasury the "Evidence-based Reading Instruction Program Fund". The fund shall be administered by the department and used to reimburse school districts and charter schools for efforts to improve student literacy, including, but not limited to: initiatives that provide optional training and materials to teachers regarding best practices in reading pedagogies; resources for parents and guardians to assist them in teaching their children to read; funding for reading tutoring programs outside of regular school hours; stipends for teachers who undergo additional training in reading instruction, which may also count toward professional development requirements; and funding for summer reading programs. The fund shall consist of moneys appropriated annually by the general assembly from general revenue to such fund, any moneys paid into the state treasury and required by law to be credited to such fund, and any gifts, bequests, or donations to such fund. The fund shall be kept separate and apart from all other moneys in the state treasury and shall be paid out by the state treasurer pursuant to chapter 33. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 33.080 to the contrary, moneys in the fund at the end of the biennium shall not be transferred to the credit of the general revenue fund. All interest and moneys earned on the fund shall be credited to the fund.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
● Establish guidance for the Evidence-based Reading Instructional Grant Program. ● Create applications and reimbursement structures for LEAs to receive reimbursement for literacy efforts that meet the criteria.	● Apply to the various literacy reimbursement opportunities. ● Ensure the LEA follows the guidelines identified in the reimbursement application required for reimbursement. ● Provide district-level training to ensure educators understand the literacy reimbursement programs.	● Follow the guidelines identified in the reimbursement application.	● Participate in LEA training focused on the Evidence-based Reading Instructional Program. ● Adhere to all aspects of the requirements identified in the application.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.268, RSMo: “Each local school district shall have on file a policy for reading intervention plans for any pupils of the district in grades kindergarten through three pursuant to the provisions of this section. Such plans shall identify strategies to be followed by the district teachers to raise a pupil identified as reading below grade level by recognized methods to reading at grade level by the end of the third grade. Recognized methods of identification may include but need not be limited to the scores of the pupil obtained through any established standardized testing program currently administered by the district, observations of classroom teachers, and documented classroom performance.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
Develop guidelines to assist LEAs in formulating policies for RSPs.	Adopt and adhere to a RSP local board policy.	- Adhere to the RSP local board policy. - Provide information to staff, parents, and/or guardians regarding the policy.	Adhere to the RSP local board policy.

Section 167.268.2, RSMo: the Department shall develop guidelines to assist districts and charter schools in formulating policies for RSPs. Such guidelines may include, but are not limited to: measures of reading proficiency, strategies for addressing reading deficiencies, timelines for measuring pupil improvement in reading, and information on screening of dyslexia. Such guidelines may also identify performance levels for pupils identified as handicapped or severely handicapped and conditions under which such pupils may be exempt from the provisions of this section and section 167.645.

LEAs and Charter, School, and Teacher

- Establish a communication plan for distributing information aligned to evidence-based literacy to all parents and guardians, including parents of students who are identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading.
- Develop a school-to-home connection resource for parents and guardians that integrates evidence-based literacy strategies to support student literacy at home.

Section 167.268.3, RSMo: RSMo–“Each local school district enrolling a pupil identified as reading below grade level shall develop an individual plan of reading intervention for such pupil. The individual pupil's plan may include individual or group reading development activities. The plan may be developed after consultation with the pupil's parent or legal guardian.”

LEAs and Charter, School, and Teacher

- Adhere to the provisions included in Section 167.645, RSMo.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.645.1, RSMo: “Each school district and charter school shall assess all students enrolled in kindergarten through grade three at the beginning and end of each school year for their level of reading or reading readiness on state-approved reading assessments. Additionally, all LEAs-school district and charter school LEAs shall assess any newly enrolled student in grades one through five for their level of reading or reading readiness on a reading assessment from the state-approved list. At the beginning of the school year, each school district and charter school shall provide a reading success plan to any student who: (1) Exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading which creates a barrier to the child's progress learning to read. The identification of such deficiency may be based upon the most recent assessments or teacher observation; or (2) Has been identified as being at risk of dyslexia in the statewide dyslexia screening or has a formal diagnosis of dyslexia.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
● Provide a state-approved reading assessment list. ● Provide guidance and technical assistance related to assessment.	● Select a state approved reading assessment. ● Train teachers on the selected reading assessment. ● Monitor assessment and analyze LEA reading data.	● Administer a reading assessment within the first 30 days of the school year and prior to the last 30 days of the school year to determine student progression in reading. ● For any student entering after the start of the school year, administer a reading assessment and provide a RSP as needed. ● Monitor and analyze building reading data.	● Participate in building training focused on the reading assessment. ● Utilize assessment data as well as teacher observations to identify students' reading strengths and reading deficiencies to inform classroom instruction.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.645.2, RSMo: “The district or charter school shall notify the parent or guardian of any student in kindergarten through grade three who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading at least annually in writing, and in an appropriate, alternative manner for the parent or other guardian if necessary, of the following: (1) That the child has been identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading; (2) A description of the services currently provided to the child; (3) A description of the proposed supplemental instructional services and supports that the school district will provide to the child that are designed to remediate the identified area of reading deficiency. For students identified as being at risk of dyslexia or those that have a diagnosis of dyslexia the district shall provide an explanation that the instruction that will be used to teach the child reading shall be explicit, systematic, and diagnostic and based on phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, morphology, syntax, and semantics; (4) Strategies for parents and guardians to use in helping the child succeed in reading proficiency, including but not limited to the promotion of parent-guided home reading.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
• Provide guidance and a template for an RSP.	• Establish an LEA process for the development and maintenance of RSPs. • Analyze students' progress toward reading proficiency. • Ensure parents and/or guardians are notified when student exhibits a deficiency in reading.	• Develop an RSP that includes intensive interventions for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. • Ensure notification procedures are followed in a timely manner.	• Administer reading assessments, as defined in Section 161.645, RSMo, to identify students who qualify for an RSP. • Develop an RSP that includes intensive interventions for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading and strategies parents and/or guardians can use to support the child at home. • Notify parents and/or guardians in writing about the deficiencies immediately upon determination and with each quarterly progress report.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.645.3, RSMo: “If a LEA the school district or charter school provides a summer reading program under this section, the district or charter school shall notify the parent or guardian of the each student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading of the opportunity to attend the summer reading program.”

The Board / The Department	LEA	School	Teacher
Provide guidance and a template for an RSP.	- Establish an LEA process for the development and maintenance of RSPs. - Analyze students' progress toward reading proficiency. - Ensure parents and/or guardians are notified when a student exhibits a deficiency in reading.	- Develop an RSP that includes intensive interventions for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading. - Ensure notification procedures are followed in a timely manner.	- Administer reading assessments, as defined in Section 161.645, RSMo, to identify students who qualify for an RSP. - Develop an RSP that includes intensive interventions for any student who exhibits a substantial deficiency in reading and strategies parents and/or guardians can use to support the child at home. - Notify parents and/or guardians in writing about the deficiencies immediately upon determination and with each quarterly progress report.

Section 167.645.4, RSMo: “ If a student has a substantial reading deficiency at the end of third grade, the student’s parents or guardian and appropriate school staff shall discuss whether the student should be retained in grade level, based on a consideration of all relevant factors, including the reading deficiency, the student's progress in other subject areas, and the student's overall intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development. A decision to promote or retain a student with a substantial reading deficiency at the end of grade three shall be made only after direct personal consultation with the student's parent or guardian and after the formulation of a specific plan of action to remedy the student's reading deficiency.”

LEA and Charter, School, and Teacher

- Analyze student reading data and determine if the student is one or more grade level(s) behind in reading readiness.
- Review student’s progress in other subject areas, and the student’s overall intellectual, physical, emotional, and social development.
- Convene a meeting to consult with the student’s parents/guardian to discuss retention or promotion if a student has been identified as having a substantial reading deficiency at the end of grade three. A decision shall be made after the consultation with a student’s parent/guardian and a plan of action is developed to remedy the student’s reading deficiency.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.645.5, RSMo: “ Each school district or charter school shall do all of the following:

LEA

- Provide students who are identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading, have been identified as being at risk for dyslexia, or have a formal diagnosis of dyslexia with intensive instructional services and supports specified in the RSP, as appropriate according to student need, free of charge, to remediate the identified areas of reading deficiency, including additional scientific, evidence-based reading instruction and other strategies prescribed by the LEA which may include but not limited to the following: (a) small group or individual instruction; (b) reduced teacher-student ratios; (c) more frequent progress monitoring; (d) tutoring or mentoring; (e) extended school day, week, or year; and (f) summer reading programs;
- Provide any student with a formal diagnosis of dyslexia or a student who was found to be at risk of dyslexia with evidence-based reading instruction that addresses phonology, sound-symbol association, syllable instruction, morphology, syntax, and semantics provided through systematic, cumulative, explicit, and diagnostic methods.
- At regular intervals, but no less than four times per year in a manner that reflects progress through each school term, notify the parent or guardian of academic and other progress being made by the student and give the parent or guardian other useful information.
- In addition to required reading enhancement and acceleration strategies, provide all parents of students, including parents of students who are identified as having a substantial deficiency in reading under subsection 1 of this section, with a plan that includes suggestions for regular parent-guided home reading.

Section 167.645.6, RSMo: “ Each school district and charter school shall ensure that intensive reading instruction through a reading development initiative shall be provided to each kindergarten through grade five student who is assessed as exhibiting a substantial deficiency in reading. In addition to the requirements otherwise provided, such instruction shall also comply with all of the following criteria:”

LEA

- Instruction shall be provided to all kindergarten through grade five students who exhibit a substantial deficiency in reading under this section.
- Assessments shall measure phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.
- Instruction shall be provided during regular school hours.
- Provide a reading curriculum that meets the requirements of Section 170.014, RSMo, and at a minimum has the following specifications: (a) assists students assessed as exhibiting a substantial deficiency in reading to develop the skills to read at grade level; (b) provides skill development in phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension; (c) includes a scientifically based and reliable assessment; (d) provides initial and ongoing analysis of each student's reading progress; and (e) provides a curriculum in core academic subjects to assist the student in maintaining or meeting proficiency levels for the appropriate grade in all academic subjects.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Section 167.645.7, RSMo: “ School districts and charter schools shall report to the department the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented by the LEA school districts and charter schools pursuant to this section as well as the reading assessment data collected for grades kindergarten through five. The department shall annually prescribe the components of required or requested reports.”

LEA

- Identify specific intensive reading interventions and supports provided to students who require an RSP.
- Intensive reading interventions shall align with evidence-based reading instruction.
- Report to the Department the specific intensive reading interventions and supports implemented.
- Assess students for level of reading or reading readiness using a state approved reading assessment.
- Report to the Department all required reading assessment data.

Section 167.645.8, RSMo: “ LEAs shall address reading proficiency as part of its comprehensive school improvement plan,”

LEA

- LEAs shall draw upon information about children from assessments conducted pursuant to subsection 1 of this section and the prevalence of deficiencies identified by classroom, elementary school, and other student characteristics.
- As part of its Comprehensive School Improvement Plan or contract, each LEA shall review chronic early elementary absenteeism for its impact on literacy development. If more than fifteen percent of an attendance center’s students are not at grade level in reading by the end of third grade, the Comprehensive School Improvement Plan or contract shall include strategies to reduce that percentage, including school and community strategies to reduce that percentage, including school and community strategies to raise the percentage of students who are proficient in reading.
- LEAs shall provide professional development services to enhance the skills of elementary teachers in responding to children’s unique reading issues and needs and to increase the use of evidence-based strategies.

APPENDIX C

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